The Negroes AND The Jews

The story of the historic alliance of two groups since the 1800's, their struggle for equality with other Americans and of the hostility that has grown between them in the last decades.

Lenora E. Berson

$8.95

The Negroes AND The Jews

Lenora E. Berson

In this fascinating survey of the alliance between the Negroes and the Jews from the pre-Civil War era to today, Mrs. Berson traces the historical partnership of two prejudiced-against peoples and explores not only their separate and collaborative histories and economics, but their individual struggles for identity, justice and true freedom.

The historical evidence traces the growing identification of Jews and Negroes as "undesirables" in the United States and examines the similarities between anti-Negro and anti-Jewish hate campaigns both past and present. Through actual interviews and personal experiences, the author analyzes the complex sociological and economic pressures exerted on and by both groups, which have resulted in a series of conflicts and alliances between them. Her discussion ranges from their problem of identity in psychologically WASP America, to the sociological implications of prejudice as it has affected housing, education and job opportunities, to the factors pressuring the two groups into both cooperative and competitive efforts, and, finally, to the present phenomenon of Black anti-Semitism toward the Jewish community which has assimilated into "white America."

Mrs. Berson concludes by documenting the historical reasons for the Jewish community's fear of this Black anti-Semitism, and suggests that the tensions surrounding that conflict must be resolved by the entire American community in an effort to realize this country's promise of equality.

No. .....

THE TRVSTEES OF THE
PVBLIC LIBRARY
LVX
OMNIVM
CIVIVM
OF THE CITY OF
BOSTON
1852 1878

THE NEGROES AND THE JEWS

THE NEGROES AND THE JEWS

Lenora E. Berson

RANDOM HOUSE

New York

MT. PLEASANT
E184
.A1B44

Copyright © 1971 by Lenora E. Berson
All rights reserved under International and Pan-American Copyright Conventions. Published in the United States by Random House, Inc., New York, and simultaneously in Canada by Random House of Canada Limited, Toronto.

Standard Book Number: 394-46283-1
Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 79-85622
Manufactured in the United States of America
by The Book Press, Brattleboro, Vt.

23456789

First Edition

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

To the memory of my father

Dr. Matthew S. Ersner

TWO NATIONS ARE IN THY WOMB
AND TWO PEOPLE SHALL BE SEPARATED
FROM THY BOWELS
AND THE ONE SHALL BE STRONGER
THAN THE OTHER PEOPLE
AND THE ELDER SHALL SERVE THE YOUNGER.

Genesis 25 : 23

CONTENTS

	PROLOGUE: A TALE OF TWO CITIES	3
1	SHADOWS OF THE PAST	10
2	THE COMING OF THE SECOND EMPIRE	29
3	RED, WHITE AND BLUE FASCISM	46
4	UPLIFT FOR SECOND-CLASS CITIZENS	63
5	THE PATRIARCHS	81
6	DAYS OF BROTHERHOOD	96
7	FOOT SOLDIERS IN THE BLACK HAGANNAH	112
8	THUNDER ON THE LEFT	128

9 ZIONISM AND BLACK NATIONALISM 146

10 QUESTIONS OF IDENTITY 175

11 WHITE HIPSTERS AND BLACK JEWS 194

12 LANDLORDS AND TENANTS 214

13 THE STRIP 244

14 THE BIG BLACK SCHOOLHOUSE 284

15 RIOTS AND POGROMS 331

16 THE POLITICS OF RACE 363

EPILOGUE: PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION 418

THE NEGROES AND THE JEWS

PROLOGUE:

A TALE

OF TWO CITIES

On Saturday, August 29, 1964, Max Gordon's life came full cycle. In fifteen minutes of violence, the long strands of history that stretch back in time to Biblical antiquity and to the hot jungles of equatorial Africa came together in a blood knot.

It was the second night of the great Philadelphia riot in which 632 Jewish stores and businesses were broken into and looted. Despite the turmoil, Gordon's Ladies Apparel Shoppe was open for business. The eye of the racial hurricane was more than a mile away.

"I remember," the proprietor said, with the heavy accent of a Jew from the Russian-Rumanian province of Moldavia, "I was standing by the cash register. I was getting ready to close up. It was nine o'clock. When a brick broke the front window." Straightening his heavily muscled arms, which had been folded in front of the exuberant and somehow inappropriate floral print of his short-sleeved,

open-necked Dacron sport shirt, Gordon pointed to where the missile had landed. It was not five feet from the cash register, next to the cotton-dress rack marked with a big sign SPECIAL SALE.

The store at 917 Marshall Street is dead center of the strip that thirty-five years ago was the mercantile heart of Jewish Philadelphia. Marshall Street is still a ghetto street, but the Jews have been replaced by other shoppers. The buyers now are the new immigrants to the urban nation—the rural Southern Negroes.

"When I saw that brick, I knew what it meant. But I'm no scared baby, I picked up a stick and I went outside." Gordon's voice rose in retrospective rage. "There in front of the store was a crowd of maybe twenty-five colored. I know what they want. They think I've got a nice store to rob. It was just like a pogrom."

Max Gordon, who was born in Czarist Kishinev in 1903, the year of its most infamous anti-Semitic blood bath, did not make the comparison idly. "My father had a wholesale dry-goods store. We sold cloth to all the Jewish merchants in Moldavia. You know, those peasants there were very ignorant people. They did not know how to be shopkeepers, so they bought from the Jews and they hated the Jews."

In 1919, two years after the first Russian revolution and two years before the end of the civil war, there was another pogrom in Kishinev. "I remember, I must have been sixteen or seventeen then, a whole bunch of Ukrainians came to my father's store. They came and they burnt it down. But I hit one of them with a stick. I got his gun. When I went outside during the riot, all I could think of was that night in Kishinev."

Gordon escaped from the pogrom and spent the next few years wandering around the Soviet Ukraine, earning his living as a peddler. "It was an unbelievable time. You went to bed, there was one government. You got up the next morning, there was another government. You tell people in this country you didn't eat bread for six months,

they don't believe you. They can't imagine such a thing. Believe me, I saw plenty. They were terrible times. The Reds wanted to kill me because I was a Jew capitalist. The Whites wanted to kill me because I was a Jew Communist. The Greens [the separationist Ukrainian Army] wanted to kill me because I was a Jew, and the robber bands just wanted to kill me. The people were full of blood and hate, and so they turned on the Jews. It was always the Jews they turned on when they could do nothing to help themselves."

In 1928 Gordon left Russia. He made his way to the United States by way of Cuba, where he lived for three years. "When I landed in Philadelphia I had six dollars in my pocket. I started to work for a mill that made stockings. Then I would take home the seconds and fix them and sell them at night. Finally I became a jobber. I worked all the time, and all the time I saved money. When I made twenty dollars a week I put away fifteen." He paused. "I'm not prejudiced. There are good and bad in all kinds, but the young people now spend, they don't save. I mean the colored. I know some Jews say we and the colored have to stick together because of prejudice. I know that a lot of people think that Jews and colored are alike because the same kinds of things happen to them. They think that if the Jews can get ahead, so can the colored if they copy us. But let me tell you, and I'm not prejudiced, the colored might be a lot of things but one thing they are not is Jews."

In four years as a factory worker, mender and jobber, Gordon saved a hundred dollars. It was enough money to enable him to buy a pushcart, merchandise and a place along Marshall Street from which he could operate. From his stand he hawked: "Ladies' underwear, stockings, silk and cotton, scarfs, slips and nice blouses, very good goods, very cheap prices and I give credit."

Sixteen years later Gordon abandoned his pushcart for a Marshall Street store. "I bought the building too. My wife and I and my kids lived upstairs. In 1951 it was still a good

neighborhood—a lot of Jews and some Poles and Ukies, but it was all white. Then it started to change. Now all we have living here is Puerto Ricans and colored, but it was always a tough neighborhood. Listen, some whites are tougher than the colored, but the middle-aged colored women—they are all right. It's the young ones that are very tough.

"One day a young colored fellow came in here. He looked at me and asked me how come I wasn't afraid he would jump me. I told him, 'Listen, this isn't the old country. Here I'm not afraid to call the cops because I'm a Jew.' " As he spoke, Gordon's voice grew louder. His blue eyes narrowed. The bravado seemed an attempt to belie the fears he would not admit. "They come in here and they buy things. Then they don't like something, they want their money back. I give it to them. A girl came in here last week for a pair of light blue stretch pants. Two days later she was back. 'They don't fit,' she said. You could see she wore them, and plenty. One leg was all dirty, but for two-fifty, I don't need to be aggravated. I made up my mind to some of them I just won't sell."

Gordon shrugged his shoulders. "From this store I sent my son to college, and my daughters married all right—they all live in nice houses in nice Jewish neighborhoods. One daughter always asks me why I don't leave. But where am I going to go? If I go to a shopping center, I will have to pay a couple hundred dollars a month rent and I will have to get a salesgirl. That is another sixty or seventy dollars a week. I would need a girl to help with the underwear. Here they are used to me, they don't mind if I help them. Besides, the colored don't bother me. I'm not afraid. Anyway, it's dangerous now all over. I've got a watchman for the store at night, and upstairs I'm safe. No, I'm not going anyplace, I'm going to stay here."

In the black metropolises that are forming in the core areas of all the great American cities: in Harlem, Lawn-

dale, Watts and in "the barbecue pits" of North Philadelphia, it is the Max Gordons and their younger, more Americanized co-religionists that form the business infrastructure. It is the Jewish merchant, grocer and landlord who has become the face of white urban America. Mr. Charlie has been metamorphosed into Goldberg. And Goldberg has eclipsed that other older and perhaps equally unreal image of the Jew so poignantly depicted in the Negro spirituals—the Jew who, like the Negro, suffered the bonds of cruel slavery.

But the refrain along with the beat has been changed. The hymn has been syncopated. And in the jungle of the cities, the Negroes' faith in the Lord's love has been chilled into a cold fury at man's inhumanity.

At first Earl did not want to talk. Squirming, uncomfortable on the bench in Dewey Square, he seemed suddenly ashamed of the shabbiness of his clothes and the dirt of his body. Afraid of the bright Harlem sun and of the reflected flecks of light from the brightly painted, highly polished passing cars, he kept his face focused on the ground. When he did look up, his eyes were hidden behind cheap, oversized sunglasses that wrapped in a bad fit around the sharp contours of his face.

It was not until he started to walk along the familiar passages of Harlem, over 127th and down Lexington, up the named streets and across the numbered ones, that he began to speak with ease. He pointed to the Apollo Theatre, the famed jazz and rock-and-roll emporium, and to the Palm Café. "Man, that's where the action is." The Palm Café is known as a hangout for pimps and hustlers. Caught up in the narrative of his turf, he took an inverse pride in the tenements and the billiard halls, the whorehouses and the places where the hopheads went to sleep it off. Earl, unlike many Harlemites, was born in New York City, and though he has no feelings of attachment for people, he does have a strong sense of place. In his life story

there is much of the tragedy and pathos of that abused word "alienation." Son of an itinerant storefront-church minister from North Carolina who came to Harlem during the first great migration in 1917, Earl is a man who never really had a home. His father deserted the family when Earl was four, and his mother, who was a tubercular, died when he was fourteen. His sisters and brothers were scattered. "For a while I slept at an aunt's and then my rent was paid by the reform school a couple of times."

Now in his early thirties, Earl never finished high school. He was unwilling to talk about "how I make my bread." Sometimes he indicated he was on "charity," a common Harlem way of referring to relief, and sometimes "I find things before they get lost." "This suit," he said, "I bought real cheap during the riot." Although it was creased and dirty, it was not worn out. Earl admitted going to jail once for passing a bad check and once for narcotics.

"Nobody wants to give you a job if you've got a record. And if you do get one, it's a racket." But then everything in Earl's life was "a racket" or "a gyp." He was a "victim" of the white world and "the Jew business." Angrily he pointed to grocery stores with Jewish names that he claimed sold rotten food, to stores that he swore sold cheap clothes at high prices, to Jewish-run bars and to a Jewish real estate office. "You want to know why we hate Jews? I'll tell you why. When I was born the doctor was a Jew. The white teacher was a Jew. The landlord is a Jew. The grocer is a Jew. The man who gives credit at the store is a Jew. The man who takes back what you bought when you can't make the gyp payments is a Jew. The man at the employment agency is a Jew. The man who hires you is a Jew, and the man who fires you as soon as you finish paying the commission to the other Jew for getting you the job is a Jew. Then some Jew wants to take you to lunch because it's Brotherhood Week. You know all those Jews in the civil rights marches and going down South—you know why they do it? They do it to take the heat off them-

selves. They've got a bad conscience because they live on black dollars. We had the riots because of the Jews."

Standing at ground zero on opposite sides of the racial barrier are the instant man and the man who is history. On one side is the Old World—on the other, the cool world. Locked into a strange confrontation are the people to whom America has proved to be the Promised Land and the people whose past and present condition makes a mockery of the ideal that "all men are created equal."

The relationship between the Negro and the Jew is not, however, limited to the cruel juxtaposition of buyer and seller. Frequently, and perhaps inappropriately, coupled together because of their minority status and the history of prejudice and persecution that has branded them, the Negroes and the Jews have created a web of social, political and economic connections which is at times complementary and at times conflicting, and always complex. Separately, and in combination, these two disparate peoples have played major roles in the social revolution that has transformed twentieth-century America. As allies they are at the core of the liberal movement in the United States. As antagonists they may well hasten the nation down the bloody road of racism and reaction.

This book is the strange story of the relationship between the Negroes and the Jews, from its beginning to the present. This is the story of the facts and the myths, the real and the illusory. It is the story of the effect of this ambivalent partnership on America's past, present and future.

1

SHADOW OF THE PAST

South Carolina, that most Southern secessionist and segregationist of states, was the stage upon which the first act of the drama of the Negroes and the Jews was played. The three leading characters all lived in the last half of the nineteenth century and enacted their crucial roles in the seething tragedy of the Reconstruction and its overthrow.

Two were of Jewish heritage: one, Francis Cardoza, was an outcast; the other, Edwin Moise, an aristocrat. The third actor, Benjamin Tillman, who in many ways played the traditional villain, was a poor white farmer who became one of the precursors of the nation's demagogues of racism. Together they wove the tangled strands of the bloody tapestry that has become the background for the politics of color and creed. The evils inherent in this politics now threaten our national life and could even lead to the possible dissolution of our liberties.

The first of the three, Francis Lewis Cardoza, was one of the most powerful politicians of the late 1860's. Today the name, along with the picture of the man with the muttonchop whiskers, has almost been erased from the history books. If he is remembered at all, it is in scurrilous little footnotes to the life of his more illustrious cousin, Supreme Court Justice Benjamin Cardoza.

For Francis Cardoza was literally a black sheep who contained all the anomalies and contradictions of the slave society from which he sprang. The illegitimate son of a mulatto woman and a Jewish apologist for the slave establishment, he stood in the classic Freudian posture of opposition. His father, Jacob Nunez Cardoza (later Americanized to Jacob Newton Cardoza), was the editor and publisher of one of Charleston's leading newspapers, the *Southern Patriot,* and a man who could write with a clear conscience "that slaves enjoyed more wealth than free laborers" and saw "the virtues of commerce as a greater leveler of distinctions than the wildest spirit of Democracy that ever vexed the quiet order of society."

The Cardozas of South Carolina were, by American standards, an old family. They had been in the New World for nearly one hundred years when Francis was born in Charleston in 1835. Like many of the colonial Jewish settlers, they could trace their ancestry back to the Iberian Peninsula. Driven out of their homeland by the fanatical "ideals" of the Inquisition, the Sephardic aristocrats—physicians, philosophers, astronomers, courtiers and advocates—had fled for their lives northward to the more liberal atmosphere of the Spanish lowlands, which subsequently became Holland. They then continued westward across the Channel to Cromwellian England and finally completed their odyssey in America in the eighteenth century.

Ironically, the same demonic energy which created the Inquisition—with its pernicious doctrine of *sanguina limpeza,* or pure blood, the forerunner of the malevolent

racial codes of the American South and Nazi Germany—also supplied the motivating power for the great Portuguese and Spanish explorations of Africa and America. One result of these incredible journeys was the inauguration of the Negro slave trade, which would later deny Francis Cardoza's maternal ancestors their freedom and their heritage at the same time it provided a Promised Land for the persecuted peoples from whom his father came.

Francis Cardoza's great-grandfather, Aaron, was a London merchant who transferred his business to New York in 1752. His grandfather, David, was a Revolutionary War hero who settled in Charleston, South Carolina. Some time after the war he became involved in a scandal whose nature has been obscured in history, but whatever the infraction, the narrow, parochial and extremely status-conscious Jewish colony of his adopted city ostracized him. When the once-honored grenadier married the daughter of a King Street merchant, her father, with the puritanical righteousness of an Old Testament patriarch, disinherited her. Leaving the city of Charleston, with its Jewish community that was second in numbers and power only to New York, David Cardoza and his wife settled in the frontier town of Savannah, Georgia, where Jacob Nunez Cardoza was born.

It is impossible to state with any assurance to what extent the shadow of his father's shame clouded Jacob Cardoza's life. It cannot now be known if the son's return to Charleston was motivated by a desire to clear his father's name or by his own determination to prove himself by winning the approval of the aloof Jewish community that played so influential a role in the commercial life of what was then the nation's busiest port city.

Unquestionably, Jacob Cardoza's reputation as the South's most prominent economic theoretician—he developed the concept of a model economy fueled by slavery and the low tariff—made him an accepted and honored

figure in the society that had expelled his father. It also gained him prominence in the great world that lay beyond the King Street merchants. In accepting the accolades of this greater world, he accepted, too, their customs and formed a liaison with a half-Indian, half-Negro woman.

Defying the laws of South Carolina, he carefully educated his son of this union in the manner of a Southern aristocrat, sending him to Glasgow and to London. Later the son stood against the father: he publicly condemned slavery, advocated free compulsory education and openly espoused racial integration and a democracy that would include the landless poor of both races.

Scion, albeit from the wrong side, of a notable Jewish family, Francis Cardoza was a Presbyterian minister. A white man in appearance, he was in fact a Negro. A Republican in South Carolina, he attempted to impose an equalitarian superstructure on the base of the old feudal order. Inevitably he failed, and in failing, was consigned to the oblivion that history has prepared for many politicians who are ahead of their time.

Today Cardoza's lineage is of greater interest than his accomplishments. The idea of a Negro Jew seems contradictory. The concept of Negro, like the concept of Jew, is discreet and indivisible. About both there is a common mythological assumption of race, an assumption which has no basis in reality although its power to influence men and pervert their politics is formidable.

The common denominator in the otherwise divergent and even antipathetical histories of the Negroes and the Jews is this tradition of separateness; in their inability to merge with the mass that surrounds them, they are alike. Both have been victims of caste systems which viewed them as pariahs, and in this they are unique among Americans.

To Negroes, color has lately become a banner of pride. To Jews, their religion has been not so much a source of faith as of identity. It is an identity that some have been

eager to discard but few are willing to share. The last known large-scale conversion to Judaism took place a thousand years ago in the fabled Tartar kingdom of the Kazars on the coast of the Black Sea. After this triumph, although not because of it, the Jews were assigned to a special and separate place in Europe's economic and social life. Forbidden to own land or to intermarry, they were forced to live in segregated areas in all of the continent's great cities and to wear special hats or badges to mark them out to the populace.

Forced back upon themselves, made to live in ghettos, the Jewish community developed its own internal reality. Concomitant with the creation of a deep and rich culture was a profound xenophobia. Almost by reflex action, the Jews looked upon any outsider, friend or foe, as an inferior. This history of enforced clannishness left its psychological imprint even upon the free Jews of America. It made it axiomatic that Francis Cardoza, the child of a miscegenetic relationship, could never be considered a Jew.

A cardinal fact of life in the United States, which Jews were quick to perceive, was that caste was determined by color not creed. Only in America was the Jew a white man. The view Jews and Negroes held of themselves and of each other was determined with fatal finality by the existence of that peculiar institution, slavery.

The American version of this ancient and traditional form of bondage was so ferocious that it seemed different in kind, if not in quantity, from any previously known form of servitude. Introduced by the Spaniards in Haiti in 1502, it spread malignantly across the body of the New World. By the outbreak of the Civil War, a majority of the people living in the Confederacy were slaves. In Cardoza's South Carolina more than 60 percent of the population was Negro. Charleston's wealth was created by the slave trade and declined with its end.

American slavery, unlike that of antiquity, was based solely on color and denied the humanity of its victims. The profound difference can be illustrated by the story of two Jacobs. In the Bible, Jacob the Patriarch had twelve sons, from whom the twelve tribes of Israel sprang. Of the twelve, four—Dan, Naphtal, Gad and Asher—were the sons of slave women, yet all four were recognized as the sons of Jacob and equal, if not in their father's affection, certainly in his patrimony. Jacob Cardoza had one son, who was made an outcast by the descendants of the earlier Jacob and forced to assume his mother's black identity.

But in assuming this identity, Francis Cardoza assumed, too, a responsibility for lightening its burden. His opportunity came at the conclusion of the Civil War. In October 1865, having lived in Europe and New England for more than ten years, he returned to Charleston. Striding its streets in his swallow-tailed coat, he was transformed by one of the great upheavals of history from a pariah to a conqueror. At last sure of himself, he was surrounded by fear and uncertainty. The beautiful city, with its famed cypress trees, its gardens and wrought-iron balconies, was in a state of chaos. Water and fire had destroyed a third of its buildings, which were now only ruins of tall chimneys and charred walls. Cellars were rank with grass; the streets were without pavements and ankle-deep with sand. The once-thriving harbor was deserted, the wharves overgrown with weeds and the crests of the roofs covered with turkey buzzards that incessantly flapped their wings and craned their hideous necks.

Into this city of ruins poured hundreds and later thousands of newly freed Negroes. Disoriented by the sudden realization of a century-long dream of freedom, their position in society unfixed, the new freemen suffered from hunger, disease, exposure and anxiety. Their presence in Charleston was that of a vast, black and dangerous mass. It was to these terrified and terrorized, feared and loathed

black people that Cardoza came to minister. First as a clergyman, then as a teacher, and finally as a political leader.

The position of Christianity, and in particular of the churches, on the slavery question had always been morally ambivalent. In contrast to the Jewish attitude of exclusion, the Christians had a positive mania for conversion.

One slave trader, John Newton, led two religious services daily for the miserable human chattel chained together in the hold of his ship, without ventilation, toilet facilities or clothing. Roger Williams, that noted apostle of religious tolerance, believed that Christianity offered to the slaves a precious gift, "the gift of freedom—freedom from the bondage of sin and Satan and from the dominion of men's lusts and passions and inordinate desires." Christians—North and South, slaveholders, homesteaders and poor white trash alike—were agreed that the "drove of Adam's degenerate seeds' suffering was more than offset by their fortunate delivery from a life of idolatry and savagery."

This "delivery," however, caused an unexpected alliance with those least sympathetic to its aims, the Jews. Through the distorted lens of primitive Christianity, the transplanted sons and daughters of Sudanese and Ghanian slaves saw themselves as one with "the Hebrew chillun" who suffered the bondage of Pharaonic Egypt three thousand years before. With unmatched fervor and intensity, these illiterate, tormented people, who had little or no personal knowledge either of the Jews of Europe or of America, identified with the ancient Hebrews. Because the Jews numbered less than one-half of one percent of the population and were concentrated in the cities, while the vast bulk of the Negroes were chained to the rural plantations, there was little opportunity for reality to intrude upon the new converts' religious fantasies. It is almost impossible to overestimate the influence that the

stories of the trials and tribulations of the Jews, as related in the Old Testament, exerted upon them.

In the spirituals, those musical cries of agony, Negro slaves thinly disguised as Hebrews became the anointed of a benevolent God. Moses spoke for the Negroes when he told Old Pharaoh to "let my people go," and Joshua "fit the battle of Jericho" with the weapons most readily available to the plantation chattel: marching feet, clapping hands and the voices of the multitudes. "If Methuselah, Samson and Daniel were witnesses for my Lord," so too was the black singer who warned his masters that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was on his side. "The God who weighed Nebuchadnezzar in the balance and found him wanting" was the same God that put the handwriting on the wall of the plantation prison, "for the God that lived in Moses' time is just the same today."

The Jew, however, unaware of the great expectations his history aroused, unconscious of the fact that his only ritually remembered thralldom made him seem a brother to the Negro, simply viewed the black man as other white men did. The result was that when the two did meet, their very different images of each other and their contradictory concepts of their relationship bewildered the Jews and infuriated the Negroes.

The process of proselytizing, which was to make the Jew "brother and betrayer" to the Negro, was continued by the Christian slaveholders, because it served as a convenient and safe channelization for Negro emotion. Christian doctrine taught slaves obedience and the humble acceptance of the travail of this life in exchange for the glories of the Promised Land in the next.

Proselytism did not end with the Civil War. Despite the best efforts of slave-ship captains, itinerant evangelical missionaries and willing masters, a majority of the Negroes were not Christians at the time of the emancipation. Cognizant of this fertile ground for conversion, the missionary

denominations of the North sent their emissaries south. The motives of these emissaries, however, were the opposite of those of their Southern counterparts. To them, Christianity was a tool to uplift the benighted masses, not to suppress them. Though the radical advocates of Negro freedom had always been in the minority, they were prompted by the proddings of a dissenting Christian conscience.

It was because of this Christian commitment to abolition that Cardoza became a Presbyterian minister. And it was in this spirit of Christian commitment that he returned to the South to redeem himself and his people as the head of the Avery Missionary School.

With the collapse of the Confederacy, established authority vanished in South Carolina. The only law was the law of the victorious Union army. To fill the vacuum, Andrew Johnson, a Tennessee Unionist who ascended to the Presidency after Lincoln's assassination, appointed as governor Benjamin F. Perry, a thin-lipped, hawk-nosed member of the old aristocracy. Perry, who had foreseen the Confederacy's defeat and had openly opposed his state's secession, was still a Southerner in his view on slavery. And in addition to his contempt for the Negro was his great fear of a black revenge (which only now, a century later, may be materializing).

Together with the leaders of ante-bellum days, Perry established an interim government designed to restore the old order. This government, which existed on the sufferance of the victorious Union army that had fought and died to make men free, proceeded to legislate the notorious Black Code, the avowed purpose of which was to deny Negroes the freedom that force of arms had presumably won for them.

To twentieth-century ears this nineteenth-century document has an ominous ring, and it was, indeed, a portent of things to come. However, unlike the Nuremberg Laws, whose ultimate objective was the destruction of European

Jewry, the Black Code aimed not to eliminate but to permanently keep the Negro in a position of inferiority. According to the Code, a Negro was defined as any person with one colored great-grandparent. It forbade intermarriage, restricted Negroes to menial occupations, created black justice and black laws. Though specific obligations were demanded of the Negro, his right to participate in the state's political life was explicitly denied.

Concurrent with this brief resurgence of the old order in 1865 and 1866 was a widespread wave of white violence. It was not unusual for Francis Cardoza to see the mutilated and murdered bodies of Negroes in the streets of Charleston or along the roads outside the city. The victims had been tormented and killed not only by their former masters but also by roving gangs of poor whites who viewed black freemen as a particular threat to their already precarious status. To Cardoza, the unburied bodies of murdered Negroes that marked the highways were human signposts, giving notice that though the Confederacy had been defeated, the white man was still master.

In protest Cardoza convened the Colored People's Convention of Charleston's Zion Church in November 1865. His dark eyes flashing, anger coloring the flesh that covered his Indian-inherited high cheekbones, he shouted, "The colored race has been denied the rights of the meanest profligate in the country. Congress," he demanded, "must place the strong arm of the law over the entire population of the state to guarantee equal suffrage and to abolish the Black Code."

Congress responded by denying South Carolina and other recalcitrant Southern states readmission to the Union. For Cardoza's state had not been alone in its attempt to nullify the results of the Emancipation Proclamation.

The radical Republican congressmen, who were committed to the emancipation of the Negro and his eventual complete integration into the national life, passed, over the head of a weak, protesting President, the first in a long

series of civil rights bills and wrote the Fourteenth Amendment into the Constitution. The new law specifically extended suffrage to the Negro and made justice color-blind. In addition, Congress disenfranchised white Confederate veterans and produced an overwhelming Negro electorate in the Old South.

Moving quickly to take advantage of the opportunity granted by Congress and the military government, Cardoza created the political instrument which was to bring a Reconstruction government into being. It was the Union League of South Carolina, which, in turn, became the state's postwar Republican party.

Infusing the League with the mystique and excitement of a secret society, Cardoza concocted a special oath, elaborate initiation ceremonies and patriotic songs. Around an altar on which was displayed an open Bible, the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, stood the League's officers. Each session was opened with a prayer asking for the protection of the "loyal people of the United States of America against foreign foes and domestic traitors." Amidst mysterious noises, the candidates for membership were admitted into a room dimly illuminated with flickering candlelight and welcomed as "worthy sons of America." Just as solemnly they were warned that "the circle of freedom and equal rights surrounding you" in the form of the shadowy figures of League members "must never be broken by treachery." At the close of the meetings, which featured initiations, songs and large doses of political indoctrination, all stood around the "fire of Liberty" and swore to elect only true Union men to office. The ceremonies ended with a communication of the secret signs of the order. They were the four L's—Liberty, Lincoln, Loyal and League. The utterance of each word was accompanied by special movements of the arms.

Cardoza, traveling around the state, exorting, speaking, pleading and denouncing, saw to it that a branch of the League was founded in each of South Carolina's election

precincts. It was this political machinery that garnered the votes for the Constitutional Convention of 1868 and for the Reconstruction governments that succeeded it. Cardoza's prestige and power were at their crest when he headed the Negro delegation in the Constitutional Convention. As their chief spokesman he championed the writing of a state constitution that included a guarantee of universal manhood suffrage, that outlawed racial discrimination, that declared it to be a right of all South Carolinians to have a free public education, invalidated former slave contracts, reformed the judiciary and granted the state government the power to incur unlimited indebtedness.

Throughout the eight years of Reconstruction, Cardoza's tall, imposing figure was clearly visible. He served successively in each of the four Republican administrations. First as Secretary of State for six years, and then for a two-year term as State Treasurer. His major efforts were directed toward the creation and maintenance of a public school system and the inauguration of state-aided welfare measures.

Although the standard history texts until recently presented a stereotyped view of the Reconstruction as a bestial interlude of drunkenness, debauchery and thievery, the government was sincere in its attempt to legislate a social revolution. It was this equalitarian impulse that was most fiercely resented by the native white minority. Although the charges of graft and corruption have been documented, these venal sins did not cease with the restoration of white supremacy. Only the opposition to them was muted. Corruption to the white South Carolinian was less a matter of money and more a matter of racial contamination.

The opposition to the Reconstruction, while united in its hostility toward the Negro, was divided in its vision of the future. The aristocrats longed for a return to the old feudal order. The upcountry farmers, who far out-

numbered the remnants of the lowland oligarchy, advocated a populist, if racist, government which would place power in the hands of the poor whites. It was in this three-way conflict between Negroes and the two classes of whites that anti-Semitism first became a real factor in American politics.

The fact that there were few Jews in the United States before 1860—100,000 in a population of 23,000,000—meant that they were unlikely targets for the irrational hatred of the mobs. Until the great wave of Eastern European immigration, which began in the 1880's, increased their numbers and visibility, it was the Negro and the Catholic who served as society's scapegoats. Nonetheless the small Jewish community was wary, for after a two-thousand-year history as victims, they did not believe that they were suddenly immune. Their visceral reaction was to hide, to be inconspicuous; and so, before the Civil War, there was no such thing as a Jewish bloc, a Jewish vote or a Jewish point of view on national issues. Seeking the consensus, the Jew saw the world through American spectacles. In the North he was a Unionist, in the South, a secessionist; rarely was he an active abolitionist before the war or a radical after it.

Edwin Moise, a leader in the post-bellum aristocratic movement and one of Francis Cardoza's chief antagonists, was a product of this conformist Jewish community. A heavy-set man with a walrus mustache and a flowing mane of curly brown hair, he was born into the Jewish elite of Charleston three years before Cardoza, the year that South Carolina defined the Nullification Doctrine.

The Moise history was interwoven with that of the Cardozas. For three generations the male members of the two families had been juxtaposed, first as foes and then as friends, and in Edwin's generation as rivals. His grandfather, a successful merchant, had been a member of the establishment that had disowned David Cardoza. Moise's father had hailed Jacob Cardoza, the apostle of the slave

economy; but Edwin Moise himself had refused to recognize Francis Cardoza.

Moise, a descendant of Santo Domingo plantation owners who had fled to South Carolina in the wake of the great slave rebellion of 1791, was haunted by that twisted version of the American dream, the myth of the planter. This myth was rooted in the blood history of a state that had at its start enticed white settlers into its precincts by promising thirty acres of land for every male slave owned and ten for every female.

It was for this dream of living in a columned Greek revival mansion and being master of countless blacks that Moise organized his own company in the Confederate army and fought first as a lieutenant, then as a captain and, finally, as a major. It was for this "ideal" that he was wounded at Gettysburg, that he joined Wade Hampton and accepted the support of the Red Shirt Vigilantes in overthrowing the Radical Republican Reconstruction. Unlike Cardoza, who was an outcast, Moise was acutely conscious of himself as a Jew. It was because he was so much a part of a Southern Jewish community that he was so Southern in his views.

After the failure of the pro-slavery governor Benjamin Perry to restore the *ancien régime* in 1865, the white majority attempted to win control over the blacks at the polls. Taking a leaf from Cardoza's book, Moise and his Bourbon allies founded the Reform Union party. Believing that the best that could be hoped for in South Carolina as long as the Federal troops remained was a kind of accommodation which would award equality and some degree of power to the small minority of upper-class, educated Negroes, such as Cardoza, they mouthed slogans about "racial equality." Moise's real intention, however, was not to capture the Negro vote but to gull the blacks into a false sense of security while appealing to the local whites.

Cardoza was not deceived. With all the fervor of his

evangelical ministry he went throughout the state, awakening Negroes to the perils of a party whose leaders were former slaveowners. Passionately he exhorted them to use their vote to protect their liberty.

The poor whites of the hill country responded to the electoral call of 1868 by donning white sheets and masks and forming the Ku Klux Klan. Its first objective was to stave off the election of a Reconstruction government by frightening Negroes away from the polls. Under the pretext that they rode for "justice, humanity and constitutional liberty as bequeathed to us in its purity by our forefathers," they flayed, murdered and burned their hapless victims. Riding down the main streets of the inland villages and towns, they stopped at the doors of "uppity niggers" and whites who had committed the mortal sin of openly enjoying sexual relations with Negroes. These night riders and their latter-day followers exorcised their chronic sense of inferiority by claiming a mystic racial superiority over the Negro—a superiority enforced by the sadistic rituals of castration, torture and lynching.

Moise, who was privately disdainful of the Klan rabble, was publicly silent about their crimes. And so, out of cynicism, opportunism and a fear framed by a distorted sense of human values, the tradition of violence that had been peripheral in American politics became, in South Carolina and other Confederate states, central.

To counter Klan intimidation, the state government, partly at Cardoza's instigation, formed a Negro militia. Its function was to ensure the safety of Negroes and those white radicals who supported the Reconstruction.

Despite, or perhaps because of, the formation of this black militia, there was increased Klan activity and frequent clashes between armed Negroes and whites. The Reconstruction governor called for a congressional investigation, which eventually estimated that the number of white victims ran into the scores and that the number of Negroes was in the hundreds.

Nevertheless the minority tactics of violence and fear failed, and Moise watched the "Reformers" go down to defeat. In 1868 and 1870 the election results directly paralleled the state's racial composition.

For the next five years Moise and the nativists made no effort to return to power. But in 1875, adjudging that the North was growing weary of its watchdog role and unable any longer to restrain those opposed to Reconstruction, an avowedly Democratic organization was formed. It included in its ranks the so-called "accommodationists" such as Moise and the "straight-out" Klansmen. The campaign of 1876, which saw Francis Cardoza a Republican candidate and Edwin Moise a Democratic office seeker, was bloody and ominous. Reading over its major events gives a twentieth-century man a feeling of *déjà vu*. Its pattern of violence, bully-boy street rowdyism, terror and paramilitary clubs smacks of Europe of the thirties, the Near East of the fifties, and Latin America and Southeast Asia of the sixties.

Coinciding with a Democratic party announcement of its candidates in August of 1876, there was a sudden proliferation of white men's rifle clubs. By election day they numbered 290 and had 14,250 adherents. Proudly calling themselves the Red Shirts, they systematically broke up all public meetings of the Republican party and frightened Republican candidates out of making public appearances. In a document called "Plan of the Campaign" it was stated that each Red Shirt "must feel honor-bound to control the vote of one Negro by intimidation or purchase," and it further advised the Red Shirt "never to threaten a man that deserves to be threatened. The necessities of the time require that he should die."

By these methods and others equally questionable, if less ominous, the Democratic white minority managed to overcome the Negro majority, and the election ended in a dead heat. After weeks of legal maneuvering, the Democrats gained control of the legislature, and through it, the

governor's office. In April 1876 Moise and the rest of the slate of state officers were installed and the Reconstruction was over.

To further discredit the Radical government, Moise, as Adjutant and Inspector General, launched a series of investigations ending in the prosecution and conviction of a number of high officials, including Cardoza, for an attempt to defraud the government. The irony of these proceedings was not that they revealed a state of general corruption, but that the cause of corruption was considered to be the Negroes and the radical doctrine of racial equality. There was no recognition in South Carolina at the time, or later in the standard histories of the period, that the venality of Reconstruction governments was equaled by the venality in other states of the Union. It was the era of the robber barons, watered stock, railroad manipulation and high-level fraud. Grant's administration was the most infamous in American history. In New York City it was the heyday of Boss Tweed, whose manipulations did not even have the pretense of a social program.

Cardoza was eventually found guilty and sentenced to prison. Although he was pardoned before his term began, he left South Carolina, where he had once more become a pariah, and went to Washington, where he worked first as a clerk and later became the principal of a Negro high school.

In rapid succession, much of the Reconstruction legislation was repealed or amended. Scholarships for Negroes were ended at the state university. The school in the state prison was abolished. The provisions for coeducation of the races in the state university and state normal schools were canceled. The criminal code was rewritten. Arson and rape were made punishable by death; burglary, by life imprisonment; and the theft of livestock by jail sentences of ten years. The political power of the Negroes was gradually curtailed, first by intimidation, then by

fraud, and finally by law. A colored caste was once more legally defined.

While Reconstruction was being overthrown in the South, vast industrialization was developing in the North. As this new nation arose, replacing the republic of independent farmers, a flood of European immigrants poured into the country to fill the newly created factory jobs. For the first time a significant number of those entering the United States were Jews.

The native white Southerner, defeated by war, his status threatened by the black freedmen and his livelihood endangered by agricultural depression, nurtured his hatred of the Yankees. This hatred found political expression in the Populist movement of the late 1880's and early 1890's.

Populism has a long history in the United States. It has cropped up numerous times in many different guises. It combines radical equalitarianism with profound xenophobia. Perhaps its most famous antecedent was the anti-Catholic Know-Nothing party of the 1850's. Its most recent manifestation is the American Independence party of George Wallace.

In the 1890's populism in the South was anti-Negro, anti-Catholic and anti-Semitic. It lashed out at "bankers, capitalists, and Northern oligarchs and their foreign hordes." At the same time it demanded tax reform, special consideration for small farmers, and wider educational opportunities for poor whites.

In South Carolina populism found a victim: Edwin Moise, the heavy-set Jewish lawyer who prided himself on his identification with South Carolina's upper class. In an act of ironic justice, history ensured that Moise, who rode to power on a tidal wave of racial hatred, was engulfed and submerged by this same force. The fact that he had allowed the mob's hatred of the Negro to put him into office did not protect him when his time came from

the venomous charge that, as a Jew, he was "an outsider and a member of a despised and despicable race."

Moise's villifier was Benjamin Tillman, a one-eyed down-and-out farmer from Langdon County, who lived through a decade of absolute political power in South Carolina by preaching race, class and religious warfare. Born in 1847 into a family that had lived in South Carolina since the Revolutionary War, he was a member of that group of farmers who had been utterly ruined by the Civil War. Physically unattractive and personally unpleasant, Tillman entered politics in order to salvage his fortunes and vent his spleen.

In 1886 he organized the poor white farmers of the state into the Farmers Alliance. Traveling across South Carolina, he denounced Moise in particular and Jews and Negroes in general. By inciting poor whites to rise up against their oppressors, he forged the Alliance into a political juggernaut that took control of the state's Democratic party and propelled Tillman first into the governor's chair and then into the United States Senate, where he served until his death in 1912.

Populism and its attendant anti-Semitism defeated Moise in his 1890 bid for Congress and permanently denied him further public office. And so the circle had been completed: the Negroes and the Jews had found a common enemy and would now be forced to make a common cause; in the case of the Jews, reluctantly, in the case of the Negroes, with high expectations, at least in the beginning.

2

THE COMING OF THE SECOND EMPIRE

At seven o'clock on the morning of August 17, 1915, Leo Frank, a thirty-one-year-old pencil-factory superintendent, was hanged from a tree at Frey's gin, a quiet grove outside the town of Marietta, Georgia.

Within an hour a thousand people had gathered to witness the grisly scene. Frank's body was so distorted by the agony of the lynching that his head had been twisted one hundred and eighty degrees, and his lifeless, bulging eyes stared in a direction opposite to that in which his naked feet pointed. The sight made some of the women present sick; others, with small children in their arms, pushed forward to inspect the corpse with morbid fascination. One man rushed out of the crowd and seized the hemp that bound the victim's feet and cut it up for souvenirs. Emboldened, others tore at the sleeves of the dead man's prison nightshirt.

Bob Howell, a notorious backwoods drunkard, stood in

front of the swaying corpse, flaying the air before the sightless eyes with his right fist and shouting, "Well, now we got you. You won't murder any more little girls. We've got you! We've got you!"

An amateur photographer took two snapshots of the dangling body, and prints from the negatives soon decorated rural storefronts throughout the state. Tourists could buy a picture postcard of the hanging of Leo Frank for a nickel in half the drugstores in Georgia.

In 1915, however, lynching was not an uncommon event in the poor farm country of the South. In the seventy-five years that intervened between the end of the Civil War and the beginning of World War II as many as five thousand persons were sacrificed to the blood lust of spiritually dispossessed Confederates. But the murder of Leo Frank, even in this land of casual violence, was unusual. For Leo Frank was a white man, and the chief witness to testify against him had been a Negro. More to the point, Leo Frank was a Jew, a Northerner and a capitalist. To his executioners, none of whom knew him personally, he represented all that they feared and hated. In this slim, overfastidious, punctilious man with the neatly combed black hair, they saw all of the forces which they believed had ground them into the worn-out dirt of their impoverished homeland and held them prisoner there.

The lynching of Leo Frank was a kind of shorthand symbolism, enacting the nightmares that troubled the sleep of the white Southerner. In this action was caught the twisted myths of sexual perversity and sexual superiority of the alien and the blood paranoia of a thousand years of European anti-Semitism. It was transmogrified into that peculiar American tradition of lynching, the orgiastic sacrifice by the frustrated and politically impotent mob.

Unlike the victory of the Populist Ben Tillman, whose anti-Jewish rantings at least had a peripheral relationship

to the realities of South Carolina politics in the 1890's, the Georgia lynching of Leo Frank was solely the product of the unreal world of race phobia.

From Frank's death can be dated the revival of the Ku Klux Klan, or to be more accurate, the creation of a second "invisible empire." For the Klan of Reconstruction days, having served its avowedly political purpose of driving the equalitarian Republican administration out of the Confederate state houses, had ceased to exist. And it was the trauma of Frank's lynching that escalated Jewish involvement in civil rights.

Leo Frank was born in Cuero, Texas, in 1884, and was descended from a German-Jewish family that had entered the United States along with 135,000 other immigrants between 1848 and 1855. His grandparents and their compatriots represented the first large-scale Jewish emigration into the country, and their entry in the mid-nineteenth century created a noticeable Jewish presence. By 1862 these Jews were visible enough to inspire General Grant's ill-conceived order number eleven of December 17, which expelled "the Jews as a class" from the area under his command.

The command had been based on the theory that though all cotton speculators and smugglers were not Jews, all Jews were speculators and smugglers. The idea was in large part the result of the popular image of the nearly ubiquitous Jewish peddler. A figure who can now only be viewed in the yellowed daguerreotypes of a past era, he was a little man with a big pack strapped to his back who set out to sell pots, pans and trinkets, not only to the villagers and farmers of the rural inlands, but to the ranchers and prospectors at the nation's far frontiers.

These Jews, whom Grant so presumptuously and precipitately commanded to leave his territory, were mainly immigrants from Central Europe, or their immediate offspring. They were unlike the even larger number of Christian Germans who entered the United States with them,

for they had neither agricultural skills nor artisan's talents. Only recently released from their medieval ghettos by the Napoleonic occupation of the remnants of the Holy Roman Empire and the succeeding German Enlightenment, they were physically unfit for the heavy manual labor of canal dredging, railroad building or mining, and they had no training in the professions. Descendants of a pariah people who had earned their bread scavenging, peddling and buying and selling to each other, they had fed their souls at night by studying the traditional books of their faith.

In the New World they turned naturally to the occupation they knew best, itinerant sales. Translating their literate skills from the hidden world of Hebrew scholarship to the open American marketplace, uninhibited by the rigid class restrictions of Europe, these peddlers in one generation leaped into the middle class, becoming shopkeepers, merchants and traders. It was from one of these families that Leo Frank came.

While he was still an infant the Frank family moved from Texas to Brooklyn, where Leo grew up. After attending Pratt Institute, he entered Cornell University in 1902 to study mechanical engineering. Within a year of his graduation he was offered the position of superintendent of the National Pencil Company in Atlanta, Georgia. In 1907 Leo Frank returned to the South and his peculiar destiny. At the time it seemed unlikely that this prim, unemotional young man with the pince-nez glasses would in six years come to symbolize to vast numbers of poor-white rural and recently urbanized Georgians the oppressive ruthlessness of the new industrial age.

The National Pencil Company for which Frank worked was as prosaic a manufacturing enterprise as ever took root in the American business community. Established by fourteen Atlanta and New York businessmen—one of whom, Moses Frank, was a Confederate war veteran re-

cently relocated in Brooklyn and Leo Frank's paternal uncle—the pencil factory, using Eberhard patents, was an example of Georgia's twenty-five-year drive toward industrialization. This program of industrialization had been initiated in the 1880's, when the controlling faction of the newly revitalized Democratic party became receptive to Northern commercial capital. This "New Departure," as its proponents called it, had been celebrated in the famed 1895 Atlanta Exposition, and at the time of Frank's arrest it was still being extolled by the local chamber of commerce. One chamber-authorized poster was even pasted onto the National Pencil Company's brick wall facing Five Points, the city's urban hub. In bold red letters it exhorted the citizenry to "Watch Atlanta Grow."

Not all Georgians, however, viewed this growth with equanimity or enthusiasm. To understand the resentment toward the New Departure, the blood accusations against Leo Frank and his subsequent lynching, one must look back to the history of post-bellum Georgia and understand what that history meant to a majority of the state's citizens.

The end of the Reconstruction found Georgians not so much impoverished, since a majority had always been poor, but declassed. For twenty years a triad of new-money men—Joseph E. Brown, John B. Gordon and Alfred H. Colquitt—masquerading as old-line aristocrats in swallow-tailed coats, Robert E. Lee gray beards and flowing ties, ruled the state. Encouraged by Henry Grady, the square-jawed managing editor of the famed and influential *Atlanta Constitution,* they ran the state as if it were a private business and they its major stockholders. Sanctifying a period that was even then known as the Great Barbecue, Grady cried out: "We have sowed towns and cities in place of theories and put business in place of politics . . . We have fallen in love with work . . . Every train brings manufacturers from the East and the West seeking

to establish themselves or their sons near the raw material in this growing market . . . Let the fullness of the tide roll in."

Roll in it did, but with it came a tide of discontent. Combining the nostalgia for the Lost Cause with the vituperation of the muckrakers, it drew support from the overwhelming mass of the rural poor. This force was the Populist movement. Its leader was a skinny, emotionally unstable redhead named Tom Watson.

Cutting through the sticky sentiment of Grady's idealization of Georgia farm life, which featured fat cattle adorned with tinkling bells cavorting through clover-scented meadows and fields full of snowy cotton, Watson addressed himself to the realities of gullied slopes of ruined lowland and hollow-backed cows that gave blue milk. The harsh truth was that the Georgia farmer had lost his independence and was in the grip of a system that put him in a state of virtual peonage to the town merchant. To obtain seed, fertilizer, farm implements, clothing and food, the farmer signed away his future crop. The crop itself was often inadequate to pay off the accumulated debt, since the merchant had charged interest rates ranging from 20 to 50 percent for items purchased on credit. On the farmer's side this system created a desperate need for liquid capital and bound him to planting all his land in cotton—Georgia's one cash crop. By submitting to this one-crop system, and the farmer had no choice, he depleted his land and became ever more dependent on the merchant. In the late 1880's the bottom fell out of the cotton market and the price of cotton tumbled from twenty-two cents a bale to seven cents.

Finding himself hopelessly entangled, the farmer ceased to struggle. His land declined in value and washed away, fences disappeared and buildings tumbled down, machinery fell to pieces and mortgages were foreclosed. The farmer became a tenant, a sharecropper and finally, in desperation, a mill hand or factory worker. Once off his

own land, he found himself in competition not only with others like himself but with the newly freed Negro. Depressing wages still further was the Georgia practice of leasing convict labor for as little as seven cents for nine to twelve hours a day. (Among those who availed themselves of chain-gang services were Brown, Gordon and Colquitt.) To supplement these pitiful wages, many men sent their wives and daughters to work in just such new industries as the National Pencil Company over which Leo Frank presided.

In an effort to end these evils, Tom Watson fought for cheap money, easy credit and an end to convict labor. He supported the incipient unions and sought to stop the wholesale sheriff sales of small independent farms. He railed against the bankers and the new industrialists, whom he called the "plug-hat boys." Unlike the one-eyed Tillman in neighboring South Carolina, the Tom Watson of the nineties was no bigot. With a revolutionary insight that matched his fervor, he saw that class not color should be the cement that bound together the poor farmer, the tenant, the cropper and the worker. Bravely he defied the racists and cried out to his followers, "You are kept apart that you may be separately fleeced of your earnings. You are made to hate each other because upon that hatred is rested the keystone of the arch of financial despotism. You are deceived and blinded that you may not see how this race antagonism perpetuates a monetary system that beggars both."

Abandoning the Democratic party—which had sent him to Congress in 1890—to lead the newly formed Populist party, Watson called for free education for all the nation's citizens, rich and poor, white and black, and denounced lynchings. Twice he ran for re-election to the Washington House of Representatives and twice was defeated in elections that featured the bought votes of drunken and not yet disenfranchised Negroes. Throughout the nineties and into the earliest years of the twentieth century Wat-

son remained true to his Populist economic principles and the precepts of brotherhood. His reward was isolation and political impotence.

Early in the year of 1905 he was approached by Thomas Hardwick, the congressman who had succeeded him, in regard to throwing his support to Hoke Smith for governor. It was understood that in turn for this support, Smith would endorse economic reform. To win the election against the conservative opponent who represented the railroad, mining and banking interests, a stronger issue than reform was needed. This issue was disenfranchisement of the Negro.

Realizing that the Populists could never hope to win office on their own, Watson joined Smith. However, in order for his Populist following to be able to cast the deciding vote between the New Departure Democrats and the muckrakers, it was necessary to eliminate the Negro vote. By supporting disenfranchisement and Hoke Smith, Watson was at last able to establish himself as a power in Georgia. In the process, he did serious damage not only to the causes for which he had fought in the first five decades of his life but to himself.

The racist means that he used to gain power not only overwhelmed his followers and converted them from Populists to Ku Kluxers, it also turned Watson into a stereotype of the all-American bigot. Never a cynic or a hypocrite, it was necessary for him to manipulate not only his following but also himself into believing the accusations he preached and printed in his weekly and monthly magazines, both entitled *The Jeffersonian.*

The change in his politics was more than a politician's fence-leaping; it was an almost predictable result of a disordered childhood that can best be illustrated by his family's history. Unlike his followers, Tom Watson came from the ante-bellum class of small plantation owners; at the outbreak of the Civil War his grandfather owned more than a thousand acres of land outside of Thomson,

Georgia, and forty-five slave families. His father's first action on returning from the war was to begin the construction of a pretentious plantation house in imitation of those once occupied by the old aristocracy. It had an ornate portico, a balustraded balcony and a gable supported by great fluted columns; the money, however, gave out before the inside walls could be finished, and the Watson family was forced to move to a small and poor farm. The years of Tom's childhood were marked by his father's degeneration into alcoholism and penury.

Now as he stood on the verge of old age, Tom Watson, the once lean, sharp-featured, clear-eyed young firebrand, became the morose old political boss. Beset by periods of despondency, Watson at the time of his greatest power became a chronic drunkard with paranoid hallucinations. Fear of the "hideous, ominous, national menace of Negro domination" grew by 1910 to include "the Roman Catholic hierarchy, the deadliest menace to our liberties and our civilization." With the arrest and trial of Leo Frank for the murder of the fourteen-year-old factory girl, Mary Phagan, his phobic rantings extended to "the lecherous Jew" whose lynching was instigated by his writings and preachments.

The "crime" for which Leo Frank was lynched was committed on Confederate Memorial Day, April 26, 1913. At noon, plump and auburn-haired Mary Phagan, who lived in nearby Marietta, came to Leo Frank's office to collect one day of back pay due her for her labors on the metal-eraser-banding machine. Mary Phagan never left the building alive. At 3:30 A.M., on Sunday, April 27, Newt Lee, the Negro night watchman, discovered her body in the factory basement. Her hair was matted with blood, and a cord of the kind used to tie pencil boxes was wrapped around her neck; her face had been pocked and torn by splinters and cinders. One of her eyes was blackened and swollen. Blood and urine covered her clothes, and her skirt had been tossed above her hips.

The crime had all the ingredients of that favorite Southern nightmare—the defiling and murder of a white woman. It aroused all the sexual fantasies and fears of the majority of the population. Within hours after the body was found, the Atlanta newspapers splashed the story across their front pages, where it was to remain for the next twenty-seven months. The significance of the crime was so great that it became psychologically imperative to discover an archetypical villain to blame for its commission. Though it is almost certain that a Negro, Jim Conley, a National Pencil Company sweeper who confessed to the crime, actually killed Mary Phagan, no black man was ever a serious suspect. After all, hundreds if not thousands of Negroes had been tortured, mutilated, castrated and lynched on the mere accusation that they had looked lustfully at a white woman. The actual murder of a heroine such as the newspapers had made of Mary Phagan demanded a villain blacker than any Negro could ever aspire to be. In Leo Frank, the Jew, the Yankee and the capitalist, they found the culprit who answered the description prescribed by the anxieties of the white majority, even if he failed to fulfill the requirements set by the real murder.

Although most white Anglo-Saxon Georgians were generations removed from their ancestors who had emigrated from the British Isles or had been sent to the penal colony of Georgia before the Revolution, many carried with them a vestigial feudal image of the Jew.

This image was composed of several layers of contradictory legends. The oldest legend was theological. It can be traced back to the dawn of English history, centuries before the Norman invasion and well before the first Jew found his way to those then remote islands. Upon becoming Christians, these fifth- and sixth-century Angles and Saxons were taught on the one hand to admire the chosen people and their Old Testament leaders—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, Solomon, Elijah, Isaiah and

Ezekiel; but on the other hand, as Christians, they were also taught that these same Jews had killed Christ and therefore were condemned to wander the earth, eternally scorned. This myth of a chosen people who were the first to accept the word of God and who subsequently fell from grace was comparable to the apocryphal myth of Satan. In this myth, Satan, the foremost leader of the heavenly hosts, rebelled against God and, because of his revolt, was hurled down to perdition. Just as the fallen angel Satan was transformed into the incarnation of evil without ever losing his awe-inspiring grandeur, so, too, the legendary Jew took on ever more somber colors and diabolical features without ever losing the heroic characteristics of his patriarch, warrior and prophet ancestors.

A fundamentalist people, Georgians found Hell and Satan nearer and even more tangible to them than Heaven. And the figure of the Wandering Jew as Christ-killer was never very far from their Christian consciousness.

The next layer of English lore concerning the Jew was bequeathed to the ancestors of these Georgian country people in the Norman and Angevin periods of English history between 1066 and 1290. It was based on the first actual contacts with living Jews, and had its source not in religion but in economics. These Jews who were brought to the islands by the Norman conquerors were merchants and moneylenders engaged in usury for the profit of the crown. The Jews became usurers because they had over the course of the centuries been excluded from the medieval craft guilds. These guilds, like their latter-day descendants, the craft unions, were devised to protect the livelihood of the in-group by restricting outsiders from entering into or practicing their trades; the Jews therefore were forced to concentrate in those areas of endeavor—specifically moneylending and the financing of trade—that Christians either did not want to enter or were prohibited from entering by Church doctrine. Usury was de-

fined by the Church as the lending of money at interest, and Christians were forbidden to engage in it. Thus the tradition of the Jew as capitalist and usurer.

The Jews brought to England by William the Conqueror and his descendants were given the task of aiding the invaders in consolidating their new territories by handling the complicated financial transactions of the expanded realm. The granting of credit in England became a Jewish monopoly. In the century following the Battle of Hastings, English Jews became prosperous because they carried on their economic functions at the behest of and with the protection of the king.

Jewish wealth, however, could not fail to create resentment among a conquered people who could see from their wretched hovels the fine houses of the king's favorite tax gatherers and financiers.

The kings, in a political sleight of hand, grew ever more willing to allow the Jews to serve as scapegoats for the gathering public rage and gradually withdrew their protection. The coronation of Richard the Lionhearted set off a series of massacres which reached a climax in the tragedy of York. There, the Jews, unable to escape the fury of the mob, killed their wives and children and set fire to the castle buildings in which they had sought refuge.

In addition to abdicating their role of protectors, these royal Plantagenet patrons took to taxing the Jews. In order to satisfy the royally imposed levies, the Jews were forced to raise interest rates. Since the noblemen were the main borrowers, the kings made sure that they paid their debts and the accumulated interest so that the Jews could turn the money over to the royal treasury. Thus hostility to the Jews was also widespread among the aristocracy.

Pressure increased from all sides, until the Jewish community was reduced to abject poverty and utter helpless-

ness. No longer able to fulfill their royal function, the Jews were expelled by Edward the First in 1290.

By that time, however, the image of the Jew as capitalist and usurer had been imprinted on the English mind. This persistent Jewish image to be found in literature and folklore combined theology and economics and made the Jew into Shylock the Christ-Killer.

It was Leo Frank's misfortune to be not only the object of the Southern sexual fixation but also the heir to this dual legendary inheritance. An inheritance easily translated into twentieth-century Georgian terms . . . Frank the Jew . . . capitalist, Yankee carpetbagger . . . Frank the virgin killer, despoiler and destroyer of the sacred white goddess of sexual purity.

Upon Frank's arrest, the Atlanta newspapers published rumors that the grand jury would never indict him because "the Jews had bribed them all." Throughout Frank's agonizing ordeal the suspicion persisted that "organized Jewry"—who they were was never explained—would somehow rescue Frank and save him from his just deserts. Once more "Aunt Jane and Uncle Tom," as Watson characterized his "peepul," would be cheated of their victim.

The case the prosecution eventually built against Frank was that he was a sexual pervert who between the hours of twelve noon and one P.M. criminally assaulted Mary Phagan in the second-floor metal room of the National Pencil Company. In the ensuing struggle the girl fell or was thrown against a lathe and rendered unconscious. She was then strangled and her body transported to the basement of the building, where it was found fifteen hours later.

Attesting to the district attorney's reconstruction of the crime was the state's prize witness, Jim Conley. Conley, who worked as a sweeper for the National Pencil Company, was a twenty-seven-year-old Negro roustabout who

had already served more than one term on the Georgia chain gang for drunk and disorderly conduct.

Although atypical in his criminal behavior, Conley was like other Southern Negroes—a non-person. The son of slaves, he was part of the ever-growing number of disenfranchised black men who had drifted into the city and remained rootless and displaced.

Following his role in the Frank case, Conley was again arrested in 1919 and sentenced to fourteen years on the chain gang for being involved in a fight that had ended in a stabbing. In 1941 he was picked up in a routine raid on a lottery game, and in 1947 he was arrested for drunkenness. He died in 1962.

According to Conley's sworn testimony at the trial, Frank asked him to come to the factory on that fateful day and "watch for him," as he claimed to have done at previous assignations.

A few minutes after Mary Phagan went up the stairs, Conley said he heard footsteps going back to the metal room and then a scream. Frank stamped his foot, the signal that Conley said meant he was to lock the door. At the second signal, a whistle, Conley claimed he unlocked the door and went up the steps.

Frank—in Conley's account—was trembling. "I wanted to be with the little girl," the factory superintendent was supposed to have confessed to the sweeper, "and she refused me. I struck her too hard. She fell and hit her head against something, and I do not know how badly she got hurt. Of course, you know I ain't built like other men."

Frank then ordered Conley, the prosecution stated, to get a piece of cloth to wrap the body. Conley, with Frank's assistance, was then supposed to have taken the corpse to the cellar in the elevator. Returning to the superintendent's office, Frank, it was argued, dictated two notes to the semiliterate Conley and instructed him to place them beside the body.

The notes, which Conley freely admitted writing after

he retracted his original avowal of illiteracy, made it necessary for the state to locate an accomplice if their case against Frank was to retain even a semblance of credibility. The notes themselves were curious documents whose overt intent seemed to be to cast suspicion upon Newt Lee, the night watchman who discovered the body, and unconsciously to reveal the true author of the crime.

The first note, written on a leaf of white scratch paper, read: "he said he wood love me and down play like night witch did it but the long tall black negro did buy his self." The second note, written on the brown carbon sheet of an order blank, read: "man that Negro hire down here did this I went to make water and he push me down that hole a long tall negro black that hoo it was long sleam negro i wright while play with me."

The notes themselves should have been enough to turn suspicion away from a New York-reared Cornell graduate, but even if they hadn't, Hugh Dorsey, the district attorney of Fulton County, knew for a certainty before the trial that Frank was innocent. He knew because he had the body of Mary Phagan exhumed and the teeth marks on her shoulder compared with x-rays of Frank's dentures; the two sets did not match.

Hugh Dorsey also knew that to allow Frank to live would have meant certain political death for him. The newspapers and the populace would never have accepted Jim Conley, a drunken Negro sweeper, as the supercriminal, the perpetrator of the crime of the century.

The fact that Conley had repeatedly lied to the police and admitted doing so in open court was not a mark against him but one in his favor. Conley's dishonesty matched the stereotype of the Negro in Georgia in 1913. A prisoner in the lower depths of Southern Negro life, Conley intuitively understood that white Southerners believed that Negroes lied and lied before they told the truth, having finally run out of lies. The college-educated engineer he had accused of his own crime did not under-

stand this fact. Therefore, though Frank's attorneys proved Conley a discreditable person in court, they could not discredit his testimony before a jury.

By acting out the role expected of him, Conley escaped with a minimal year's sentence for being an accomplice to the crime that he confessed to having committed on at least three occasions.

On August 25, 1913, the jury found Leo Frank guilty of first degree murder, and Judge Roan sentenced him to death. Appeals were taken to the Georgia Supreme Court, and when they were turned down, to the United States Supreme Court. The legal arguments advanced on Frank's behalf, all of which failed him, later served as precedents and winning arguments in cases brought by the NAACP in behalf of poor, exploited and unjustly treated Negroes.

It remained for Governor John Staton of Georgia to commute Frank's death sentence on July 21, 1915. For this action he was nearly lynched. Tom Watson screamed that "our Grand Old Empire State has been raped," and that Staton had "taken huge bribes from the Jews. Let the Jews of Georgia remember that we did not start this thing: let them beware how they threaten us . . . Frank belongs to the Jewish aristocracy and it was determined by rich Jews that no aristocrat of their race should die for the death of a working girl . . . While the Sodomite who took her sweet life basks in the warmth of today, the poor child's dainty flesh has fed the worms . . . Our little girl—ours by the eternal God—has been pursued to a hideous death and bloody grave by this filthy perverted Jew of New York."

And so Watson proceeded to pursue Leo Frank to his hideous death. "When mobs are no longer possible," he thundered, "liberty will be dead."

Within a week of the commutation of Frank's sentence, a group of over a hundred men, calling themselves the Knights of Mary Phagan, met by her graveside, and improvising a ritual, pledged themselves to avenge her mur-

der. Twenty-five of their number were selected as executioners. On June 24 Tom Watson's *Jeffersonian* referred to the Knights by name and stated that they had a great and invisible power. On August 12 he proclaimed: "The next Jew who does what Frank did is going to get exactly the same thing we give Negro rapists." And so Leo Frank was lynched for a crime he never committed, and the Knights of Mary Phagan, wearing bedsheets, became a new Ku Klux Klan.

This new Klan's hate program extended to Catholics, Jews, the foreign-born and Negroes. "We exclude Jews," one of the Imperial Wizards said, "because they do not believe in the Christian religion. We exclude Catholics because they owe allegiance to an institution that is foreign to the government of the United States. To assure the supremacy of the white race, we believe in the exclusion of the yellow race and in the disenfranchisement of the Negro. By the sole scheme of Providence the Negro was created as a serf." Further, the Imperial Wizard threatened to use the Klan's "great mysterious force to strike terror." It was a terror that spread like an epidemic virus of racial and religious bigotry, infecting the nation. By the mid-1920's the Klansmen numbered in the millions and polluted the political air of almost every state in the union.

RED, WHITE AND BLUE FASCISM

THE tawdry neon-lit pavement of Lenox Avenue between 114th and 145th streets in Harlem was, in the early 1940's, the heart of the most congested redlight district in the City of New York, and perhaps in the United States. It was also fertile ground for solicitations of another nature. A stroller along this garish strip could then have spotted a dozen street-corner agitators, almost all of whom sounded like reverse Tom Watsons.

"The blacker the Negro, the finer the Negro," shouted Samuel W. Daniels, a powerfully built colored man who was the mainstay of a hate sheet known as *Negro Youth*. "The blacker the Negro, the greater credit he is to his race."

Further down the street, Carlos Cook, a young man barely in his twenties, shouted, "Jews are all communists."

And there was Robert Jordan, the West Indian incorporator of the Ethiopian Pacific Movement, which pro-

claimed as its aims: "To disseminate Truth based upon historical knowledge. To study with an open mind the struggle between the New order and the Old; to secure for ourselves and posterity the rights and privileges guaranteed under the U. S. Constitution." This man, who was both vicious and pathetic, declared that these goals could be best achieved by crushing the "international Jew," who he believed was the mortal enemy of his people. With the avowed purpose of undermining the United States government, which he saw as being dominated by Jews, he formed the Black Dragon Society in the forlorn hope that a victorious Japan in World War II would "liberate the Negro." Jordan was able to gather a small following with his outbursts demonstrating that Harlem had then, as it does now, black nationalists who when they look at a Jew see a white devil.

Robert Jordan was neither the first nor the last member of a despised minority group to latch onto the endemic xenophobia of the Anglo-Saxon majority in the misguided belief that by joining this fellowship of hate he could become a "real American." It was an illusion that he shared, oddly enough, with nineteenth-century Pennsylvania's Know-Nothing Congressman Levine, who had sought to lose his Jewishness by inciting a Protestant-supremacist mob in an orgy of murder, arson and rioting in the Irish Catholic wards of the city of Philadelphia in the summer of 1844.

In a kind of frenzy of self-hate that characterizes the American bigot, whatever his color or his religion, Jordan, a century later, willingly made common cause with Joe McWilliams, the would-be American Führer, who was every bit as bitter a Negrophobe as he was a Jew-baiter. Yet, undismayed, Jordan watched the joining together of the German-American Bund and the Ku Klux Klan. The meeting took place in August 1940 at the Bund's two-hundred-and-five-acre Camp Norland in Andover, New

Jersey, where they celebrated their Americanism by lighting a forty-foot cross. Its fiery light eerily illuminated the swastika-ornamented flags that hung limply in the torpid summer night air.

These Klansmen, their Bundsmen allies and the racist agitators of Harlem, though thirty-five years removed in time and a thousand miles in space from the Knights of Mary Phagan, were their true descendants. For now a bewildering variety of religious and racial hate groups had grown up in the United States, and sunk without a trace in this new bigotry were the old Populist notions of economic equalitarianism. Too fearful to call for reform or revolution, these new breeders of a pure white Anglo-Saxon Christian American race called instead for repression. Their economic foundation shattered by the Depression, their status undermined by the successive waves of European and Jewish immigration and Negro in-migration, these small-town failures, would-be entrepreneurs, itinerant journalists and bankrupt professionals sought to defend themselves by attempting to establish a new world order. Driven by inner terrors and inspired by the overseas success of Hitler and Mussolini—men like themselves, risen from the undistinguished mass—these would-be leaders fueled the racism of twentieth-century America with more than the traditional reluctance to accept the foreigner or the mere fear of the economic competition offered by the Jew and the Negro.

Typical of the home-grown fascists of the pre–World War II period was William Dudley Pelley. A shrunken little man with parchment-dry skin and thinning gray hair, he affected a goatee and pince-nez glasses. Born in Lynn, Massachusetts, around 1890 (he constantly changed the date), he was the son of an impoverished Methodist minister. Before stumbling on the politics of anti-Semitism—which eventually brought him illegal subsidies from the Nazi government—Pelley was, by turn, a publicist, a

Hollywood scriptwriter, an author of several crackpot volumes on economics, and a spiritualist. In 1931 he established the Galahad Press in Asheville, North Carolina, for the express purpose of publishing works on "physical subjects." Nine out of ten of his followers were women who, according to testimony given at the McCormack Congressional Investigating Committee, either gave or loaned him money.

In 1934, in imitation of the Nazi Brown Shirts that had been so effective in bringing Hitler into power, Pelley founded his own guard, called the Silver Shirts. Soon his presses began to print anti-Semitic hate literature. Like that of Bob Jordan's group, the central dogma of Pelley's new faith was the myth of the worldwide Jewish conspiracy. This underground fantasy of an evil phantom government has been variously attributed to Freemasons by Catholics, and to Jesuits by Protestants, but to none has it clung so tenaciously as it has to the Jew. To bolster this incredible thesis, anti-Semites invariably give out vastly exaggerated claims as to the number of Jews in the power elite. Pelley even went so far in his crazy count as to include that scion of Dutch-American aristocracy, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. According to Pelley, the President was not only of the Hebrew persuasion but his real name was Rosenfeld.

Like other legends with a strong emotional grip, the "Jewish conspiracy" has a long history. It originated between the second and fourth centuries as a way of deterring Christians from converting to Judaism. The parent religion eighteen hundred years ago was still a proselytizing faith. By the twelfth century, at least in Western Europe, this myth had expanded into what amounted to demonology. Jews, it was asserted, took their orders from Satan, whose goal was the physical and spiritual destruction of Christendom. Most terrifying—and most invidious—was the widespread claim that Jews used the blood of

Christian children—little boys only—to make their unleavened Passover bread known as matzoth.

The distinction between the theological notion that the Jews were the worldly emissaries of Satan and the secularized fable of a Jewish world government was first made in 1797 by the Abbé Barruel as an explanation of the French Revolution—which robbed him of power, prestige and wealth and whose ideals he consequently detested. During the nineteenth century the mythical menace of the invisible Jewish empire was so inflated by the reactionary elements within the Roman Catholic hierarchy in France, Germany and Italy in their fight against secularism, liberalism and socialism, that it came to form a complete world view.

Consequently, Jews could be labeled—without internal contradiction—capitalists *and* communists, creators of inflation *and* depression. The invisible Hebrew empire, it was whispered, controlled not only all the governments of Europe but all the political parties and all the publishing outlets and newspapers. This power was supposedly being used expressly to plunge the world into chaos and misery. Just why this should be the ultimate goal of the Jews has never been explained.

The myth was propagated by a remarkable and completely fraudulent document entitled *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. The *Protocols* purported to be a series of lectures given by a member of the covert Jewish world government to its steering committee, which the author, an agent of the infamous Czarist secret police—the Okrana—dubbed the Sanhedrin, after the Jewish supreme court of Biblical days.

This document was designed originally to be used in court circles to convince the increasingly disaffected aristocracy that the trouble lay not in the Czars, but in the Jews. The *Protocols* were actually cribbed from the Parisian lawyer Maurice Joly's diatribe entitled *Dialogues*

in Hell between Machiavelli and Montesquieu, a work not directed against the Jews but against the Freemasons.

Brought into the open by the abortive Russian revolution of 1905, which followed on the heels of that nation's defeat by Japan, the *Protocols* were used to inspire the Black Hundreds, the Czarist prototype of the Nazi Brown Shirts, to massacre hapless Jews. In the aftermath of the successful Russian revolution, the *Protocols* were given even wider circulation when they were reprinted by Henry Ford in his newspaper, the *Dearborn Independent.* In the 1930's their contents were broadcast over the radio to an audience of millions in the United States and Canada by the radio priest, Father Coughlin, after which they became the stock-in-trade of all the all-American hate peddlers, including Bob Jordan.

Characteristically, the *Protocols* were both medieval and modern. Instead of accusing the Jews of ritual murder or of poisoning wells in order to infect the populace with the Black Death, they were charged with starting wars and revolutions. In fact, the document made the Jew the symbol of all that was frightening in the modern world.

The strength of this image of the Jew has deep psychological sources. It has been suggested that its power lies in its ability to focus a whole range of forbidden human emotions on the Jew and allow them in distorted form to be expressed. The Jew, it can be argued, is seen through this dark glass as an evil father-figure. Certainly the medieval woodblock illustrations of the "ritual murder" would tend to support this contention. They invariably show a young Christian boy surrounded by old men with long beards who are torturing him, castrating him and draining his blood. Even the legend of the Jews as well-poisoners has its counterpart in the *Protocols.* Jews, according to that document, ply their Gentile neighbors with bad liquor and loose women in an attempt to demoralize them. Along these same lines, American anti-Semitic literature regards

mass inoculations as a Jewish plot to inject the population with syphilis.

The Nazis hit on the ultimate association. Sexual intercourse between Jew and Aryan, they declared, poisoned the bloodstream of the world. It is at this psychological juncture of race mongrelization that anti-Semitism and Negrophobia meet.

To the racist, both the Jew and the Negro are inferior peoples whose very presence in the world is contaminating. To protect its purity, the master race is forced to separate itself from this debased stock. The quarantine in the United States took the form of exclusion from restaurants, comfort stations, water fountains, schools, housing, hotels, resorts, swimming pools and country clubs, as well as good jobs and high political posts.

Science, oddly enough, gave this hodgepodge of venom a respectable base from which to operate. In 1859 Charles Darwin published his seminal work on the origin of the species, with its revolutionary theory of the survival of the fittest. In 1862 Herbert Spenser, the English philosopher, applied this theory to society. At the same time, on the Continent, Count Joseph Arthur Gobineau, the French diplomat, littérateur and dilettante ethnologist, developed his portentous theory of race. After a four-year sojourn in economically backward Persia, Gobineau came to the conclusion that "the races of mankind are innately unequal in talent, worth and ability to absorb or create culture." According to him, the white race was culture's progenitor, but it is exhausted because "its racial composition is no longer pure."

It was Richard Wagner's English son-in-law, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, who contributed the concept that Jews were the "aliens" who had weakened Europe's Aryan peoples. It was from Chamberlain—who died in Bayreuth in 1927—that Joseph Goebbels got the ideological tenets upon which to build his propaganda.

In the United States the nineteenth-century theories of Darwin, Spenser and Gobineau had direct social repercussions. Their ideas made it possible for the native-born WASPs to institutionalize their sporadic and idiosyncratic anti-Semitism. Erecting these sentiments into a rigid code was a psychological defense against the physical fact of massive immigration from southern and eastern Europe. This vast influx into the country between 1880 and 1924 threatened the security and authority of the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant upper class. It was during just those years, when the tides of immigration were at their highest, that the sense of caste which had prevailed in the South to shut out the Negro developed in the North to proscribe the Jew.

The incident that set the pattern was the exclusion of Joseph Seligman, the New York banker, from the Grand Union Hotel in Saratoga Springs, New York, in 1870. Seligman, a close friend of General Grant, the hotel's original owner, was a frequent guest there until the death of the former President. The new management, however, turned Seligman away because they decided that the presence of Jews would lower the tone of the establishment and be bad for business. Other resorts quickly followed suit, as did restaurants, clubs, realtors, private clubs and colleges.

Most virulent of all was the reaction of such old-line New England Yankees as Henry Adams. Reeling from the blow dealt to them by the successful political challenge of the Irish, the Yankees became increasingly preoccupied with the notions of race. To compensate for their loss of control, they began emphasizing their English ancestry and "the Teutonic origin of American institutions." Powerless to beat back the Irish, they turned against the Jews, and in 1894 a clique of Boston Brahmins formed the Immigration Restriction League.

In this context it is not surprising that one of America's

most deadly fascists should have been born a New Englander. Nor is it too difficult to understand the overwhelming feeling of displacement suffered by the minister's son, William Dudley Pelley. For by the time of Pelley's birth, the prestige and power of the pulpit, once considerable in Puritan Protestant New England, had fallen. A Methodist minister's son was considered little more than shabby gentility in the increasingly industrial and cosmopolitan atmosphere of Massachusetts in Pelley's childhood.

The Jewish population, which as late as 1880 numbered only 250,000 persons scattered across the nation in 173 towns and cities, took a sudden turn upward. Joining these descendants of old Iberian and Central European Jewish families were literally millions of refugees from Russian oppression.

The assassination of the liberal Czar Alexander II in 1881 resulted in the systematic persecution and slaughter of Jews in Holy Russia. Constantine Petrovich Pobedonostev, the new Czar's former tutor and most trusted advisor, devised the solution to the "Jewish problem" there. It was to kill one-third, convert one-third, and force the remainder to emigrate. The Jews responded by running for their lives and their souls.

Instead of spreading out across the United States, these newcomers concentrated in the cities, and like the Negroes who were to follow them, they changed the urban complexion. The Jewish proportion of the population of New York City, to take only the most obvious example, jumped from 3 percent in 1880 to 30 percent in 1920, reaching 40 percent in 1940. In one year alone, 1920–21, the number of Jewish immigrants reached 119,000. This enormous increase was viewed with ever-greater displeasure by many native-born WASPs. A State Department official characterized it as "an inundation of abnormally twisted, unassimilable, filthy un-Americans, often dangerous in their habits." The alarm was widespread, and underlying the

fear of communism in the 1920's was a none-too-subtle anti-Semitism.

Unlike their co-religionists who had preceded them and who had quickly disappeared into the American melting pot, the Eastern Europeans remained distinctive and highly visible for nearly six decades. Wage earners rather than entrepreneurs, these first generations of near-oriental orthodoxy were concentrated in the garment industry. On New York's Lower East Side, in Boston's Roxbury and in the Northern Liberty wards of Philadelphia they re-created the ghettos of the old country.

Made conspicuous by their language, their customs and their costumes, they attracted unfavorable attention. Cognizant of the reaction of their white Protestant friends and neighbors, and fearful for their own newly gained and still precarious status, the older Americanized German and Sephardic Jews at first resented the newcomers and labeled them "kikes." It was only when the term was taken up by the outside world and applied to all Jews that these earlier settlers decided to give leadership to the common Jewish cause. It was a defense mechanism, as was, a generation later, the joining together of the Jewish and Negro communities under Jewish leadership to fight the legalized discrimination that penalized them both.

Typical of even the liberal temper of the country in the decade preceding the passage of the 1924 immigration restriction act was a book called *The Old World in the New*. Its author, Edward Alsworth Ross, was not only a prominent figure in the progressive movement, he was also a distinguished professor of sociology at the University of Wisconsin. Yet he was able without qualm to characterize Jews as "pushy and nosey" and to classify them as inferior to the Anglo-Saxons.

Of course, what Ross and the establishment for which he spoke really objected to was the fact that these immigrants, who had once filled the lowest jobs in the expanding econ-

omy, refused to stay in their place. Their children and their grandchildren, educated in the public schools, wholeheartedly adopted the American ideology of mobility and equality. They not only aspired, they achieved. For this, Ross castigated them. "The truth seems to be," he wrote, "that the lower class of Jews of Eastern Europe reach here moral cripples, their souls warped and dwarfed by iron circumstances . . . many of them have developed a monstrous and repulsive love of gain. When now they use their old world shove and wile and lie in a society like ours, unprotected as a snail out of its shell, they rapidly push up into a position of prosperous parasitism, leaving scorn and curses in their wake . . . The Gentile," he reiterated firmly, "resents being obliged to engage in a humiliating and undignified scramble to keep his trade or his clients against the Jewish invader."

As Ross carefully explained, it was for these reasons and not because of their religion that Jews were unwanted. Although otherwise rational, if snobbish, the professor then became entrapped by the sexual fantasies that almost always accompany calls for segregationist or exclusionary policies. "Pleasure-loving Jewish businessmen," he wrote ominously, "spare Jewesses and pursue Gentile girls." Then he added, without seeming to notice the contradiction, "most alarming is the growth of prostitution among Jewish girls . . . The scarlet woman of Jewish birth is a product of cold mercenary methods devised and handled by men of Jewish birth."

In a final gesture, the old-line WASPs, after forty years of agitation, using the so-called documentation supplied by Ross's book, were able in 1924 to pass legislation restricting immigration from southern and eastern Europe. In this they were supported by the labor unions, which sought to protect the jobs and benefits of their members from the competition of impoverished immigrants. They were not opposed by industry, whose earlier need for a

large supply of cheap labor had kept open the floodgates. Not only had mechanization reduced the need for unskilled laborers, but a new source of supply had been found. It was the Southern Negro, who was now beginning to move North in large numbers.

The barn door however had been locked too late. For the 1920's was the dying decade of the American WASP. Beneath the veneer of artificial gaiety, symbolized by the flapper, bathtub gin and the slogan impossible of fulfillment "Back to Normalcy," ugly forces were bubbling up. They found expression in racist literature and parafascist organizations, and in the America First Movement, that popular front of the right in the thirties.

Underlying the anti-Semitism of such disparate personalities as Father Coughlin, the radio priest; Charles A. Lindbergh, the national hero; Hiram Wesley Evans, the dentist turned Imperial Klan Wizard; William Dudley Pelley, the swindler ideologue; and Robert Jordan, the Harlem street-corner agitator, was the undeniable fact that the Jews by the end of the 1930's were proportionately better educated and more prosperous than the mass of Protestants and Catholics.

Although the Jew suffered along with others in the Depression, he was less clearly visible. It was not the Jew who sold apples on the street corner, lived in Hooversville, marched on Washington or stood in soup-kitchen lines. His absence was noted and resented. To the declassed and to the warped, whose angry voices increasingly expressed the inarticulate rage of a nation one-third of which had been ravished by the Depression, the "Jew capitalist-banker" became the enemy along with his "degenerate stooge," the Negro.

It was the curtailing of European immigration that gave the Negro his first opportunity since Reconstruction. The flow of cheap labor from across the Atlantic, stopped temporarily by World War I, and permanently by restric-

tive legislation aimed at Catholics and Jews, made it imperative for heavy industry to recruit domestic labor.

Starting in 1915, agents from the labor-short war industries began to scout the Cotton Belt, touting the advantages of the North. Consciously or unconsciously they repeated the pattern of the nineteenth-century shipping agents who first enticed the Orthodox Jew from the Russian Pale to American shores. Once begun, the great migration from the South has yet to stop. Between 1915 and 1940 close to 1,750,000 Negroes left the South. In the past quarter of a century another 2,000,000 have ridden the buses northward. Like the Jews before them, they settled at first in the great cities of New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit and Cleveland.

Of course, the scouts alone did not initiate the great migration nor were they instrumental in its continuance. While it was true that industrial expansion created millions of jobs, the Negroes in the main filled the service positions left vacant by the industrialization of the European immigrant.

As important a factor in the Southern exodus as positive enticement was negative inducement. The destruction by the boll weevil and the drought that plagued the black belt moved cotton growing into the western Confederate states and forced farmers, tenants and sharecroppers, black and white, off the land. The ever deepening depression in the South also resulted in whites infiltrating into what traditionally had been Negro jobs.

World War I itself was a tremendous catalyst. Negroes, more than two million of them, for the first time registered for the draft. Five hundred thousand eventually served in the army, and for the first time moved out of the rural South. Nearly a quarter of a million colored troops were sent to France. The inertia was broken, and a new pattern established. For the average Negro, living conditions in the army were more favorable than in the South.

Despite discrimination, he was offered more economic opportunities, greater personal security and greater freedom, including the unchallenged right to vote.

Just as the Jewish immigrants had written to their families in the old country about the wonders of the New World, the recently emigrated Negro passed the word south. In addition, the Negro press carried stories about the good life in the North and also ran ads for specific jobs. In the thirties dire poverty alone drove hundreds of thousands of Negroes out of their homeland. Unable to find employment either on the land or in the Southern cities, and denied welfare because of prevailing customs, many came north to go on public assistance.

Northern Negroes, like the German Jews before them, had mixed feelings about the newcomers. Although these Negroes had never known the degree of acceptance won by the old Jewish families, they saw that what social status they had achieved would be endangered as prejudice against Negroes rose. Typical of the reaction to this condition in the late twenties were the comments of the wife of a Chicago Negro physician who had lived all her life in that city. "We had been accepted as equals, but as soon as the Southern Negroes began coming in we were relegated to their class. Our white friends shunned us."

On the other hand, the Negro professional and entrepreneurial class found its economic base broadened as the Negro community grew. In the end, like the German Jews, circumstances forced them to give leadership to the cause of Negro rights and to accept the proffered help of Jewish agencies in the civil rights battles of the forties and fifties.

Negroes and Negro leadership also came to the Northern cities from outside the United States. Bob Jordan was but one of over one hundred thousand blacks who emigrated from the British and French West Indies, from Cuba and Haiti, between 1900 and 1930. These immigrants from the Caribbean, like the Negroes from the

Southern United States, settled mainly in the urban centers along the Atlantic Seaboard, particularly New York and Boston. Although most were unskilled or semiskilled laborers, many had professional skills, and by the end of the 1930's a high proportion of New York's Negro physicians, dentists and lawyers were West Indian immigrants.

While enjoying the economic benefits of the United States, Bob Jordan was angered and humiliated by its biracial pattern. In the islands, status had only been partially determined by color. Unable to find acceptance from whites, he was also unable to adjust to Negro society. Better educated than most American blacks, Episcopalian rather than Baptist or Methodist, Jordan, like other West Indians, looked down on American Negroes for their alleged ignorance and apathy. Aloof and aggressive, rejected by both the outside white world and the Harlem blacks, he sought a place within the brotherhood of hate.

Because of the precariousness of their peculiar niche in the ecology of Negro America, West Indians have frequently been advocates and leaders of stateside radical racial sects. Jordan, the black fascist of the thirties, was a lineal descendant of Marcus Garvey, the founder of the Black Star Line and the prophet of the 1920's Back to Africa Movement, and the progenitor of Stokely Carmichael, the black power advocate of the sixties.

Ironically, many West Indians came to the United States because of a fluke in the restrictive 1924 Immigration Act. Designed to shut out the Jews, Italians and Slavs, it favored British subjects. When white Britishers and Scotsmen did not immigrate in large numbers, the West Indians used up the British quota. In 1952 the McCarren-Walter Act closed this loophole and assigned the islands a minuscule quota of their own.

When the Negro, both from the Caribbean and the South, arrived in the Northern cities, he was greeted by the same mythology of race and sex that dominated the

Confederacy. Spread partially by poor white Southerners whose out-migration paralleled in pattern if not in numbers that of the Negro, it infected portions of the working-class Irish, Italians, Poles and Slavs, who saw in the Negro the same threat to status and job security as had the Southern rednecks and mill hands.

Negrophobia undoubtedly springs from some of the same emotional needs that created anti-Semitism; the difference being not in the intensity of hate projected, but in the image perceived. Not even the most vociferous bigot ever viewed the black man as an evil, cunning father, who, in league with other black men, was plotting to take over the world. Rather, he was seen as somehow "childlike," in Freudian terms as the bad son, the subhuman brute with the superhuman sexual drive. The irrational terror he has inspired in America has always been associated with the fear of rape. The existence of this sexual anxiety explains why so many lynched Negroes were castrated by their executioners. What the executioners always feared, and would never admit, was the Negro male's revenge for the white man's sexual abuse of the black woman.

Whether these fears focused on the evil powers of the mind or on the penis, they have alternately put the Jew and the Negro beyond the pale of Anglo-Saxon America. Although in most areas outside of the South these terrors lie latent, they need only the correct circumstance to activate them. It was mass migration that triggered anti-Semitism in the years preceding World War II, and it is mass migration in the years succeeding that conflict that set off nationwide Negrophobia. Whereas the Jew-hater envies the Jew his success and attributes his own failure to Hebrew guile, the Negro-hater fears becoming contaminated by the man he scorns, deprived of class and caste.

In the 1930's worldwide economic depression gave rise to supernationalism and racism. These irrational solutions

were adopted not only by Europeans but by many Americans. Focusing their apprehensions about change on the Negro and Jewish outsiders, a broad spectrum of opinion made President Roosevelt their hate object.

It was not the Bob Jordans or the William Dudley Pelleys, but the nice people who at their country clubs recited the doggerel about the first family, which went:

You kiss the Negroes
I'll kiss the Jews
We'll stay in the White House
As long as we choose.

4

UPLIFT FOR SECOND-CLASS CITIZENS

With the possible exception of the Jew, no race has ever been subjected to criticism so searing and candid, to state it mildly, as the Negro."

The author of these words was Booker T. Washington and he wrote them in a book called *The Story of the Negro,* published in 1909. Washington, one of the leading figures in American Negro history, was probably the first individual of consequence to make a connection between the social and political problems of Negroes and Jews. Washington made the earliest recorded attempt to form this partnership, which, when it was forged, yielded a rich profit of civil rights legislation. In this effort, Washington, the ex-slave, fund raiser and practitioner of moral uplift for the blacks, sold social status to the Jewish merchant prince from Chicago, Julius Rosenwald. The outward form this pioneering move took was the only possible public posture allowed for Negroes and whites in the years

between Reconstruction and World War I. In it Washington played the humble, grateful black recipient to Rosenwald's noble white benefactor. Nonetheless, the connection was more viable than it appeared.

The relationship between Washington, the founder of the ethic of the black bourgeoisie, and Rosenwald, the merchant, is in many ways a classic case study in the interplay of American social stereotypes. While Washington played his part consciously and with a degree of cynicism, Rosenwald was an innocent.

Washington's personal story is the idealization of the history of the Negro in America. The man who created a great Negro institution—Tuskegee—with little more than a fanatical faith in the necessity, though not necessarily the ability, of his people to pull themselves out of the dark pit of Southern serfdom and into the light of civilization, deserves better Boswells than he has attracted. Unfortunately the role of "good nigger" that Washington advocated for the personal survival of his people and for the survival of Tuskegee in the post-Reconstruction South is not calculated to attract the intellectual community or to be an instructive model for the new Negro politician. To his critics he replied, "The bravery and courage in which some black men put faith is a willingness either in speech or print to abuse the white man . . . He [Washington's critic] might spend but thirty minutes or an hour once a year in that kind of vindication of his race, but he got the reputation of being an extremely brave man. . . . Another man," he wrote, obviously referring to himself, "who worked patiently and persistently for years in a Negro school, depriving himself of many of the comforts and necessities of life, in order to perform a service which would uplift, gained no reputation for courage. On the contrary, he was likely to be denounced as a coward by these heroes because he chose to do his work without cursing, without abuse and without complaint."

A man lost between the extremes of hate and adulation—this is perhaps a more accurate assessment of Washington's role as the inventor of a politics of negritude. For over a quarter of a century, between the end of Reconstruction and the beginning of World War I, when the voice of the Negro was heard in the land it was the voice of Booker T. Washington.

> In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress . . . The wisest among my race understand the agitation of questions of social equality is the extremest folly . . . and that progress in the enjoyment of all the privileges that will come to us must be the result of severe and constant struggle rather than of artificial forcing. No race that has anything to contribute to the markets of the world is long in any degree ostracized. It is important and right that all privileges of the law be ours, but it is vastly more important that we be prepared for the exercise of those privileges. The opportunity to earn a dollar in a factory just now is worth infinitely more than the opportunity to spend a dollar in an opera-house.

To illustrate this speech, Washington raised his hand and separated his fingers, letting go, as his critics claimed, of all of those rights that had been written into the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth amendments of the Constitution.

In Washington's dogma of accommodation was laid the seed of black nationalism. His acceptance of separateness is echoed in the Black Muslim and Black Nationalist cults; however, his commitment to self-help and hard work has a direct descendant in the work of Reverend Leon Sullivan and his Opportunities Industrialization Corporation, the most successful of all of the nation's poverty programs. Washington's emphasis on Christian love and dignity was exemplified by Martin Luther King.

Washington was the seminal figure in American Negro history. The disciplines of disciples and dissenters alike were inspired by his person. It was in accordance with or in reaction against Washingtonian dogma that the doctrines of accommodation and agitation were born.

Negro attitudes toward Jews have also been conditioned by the still-raging controversy over Washington's pronouncements. Both the philo-Semitism of those who would model Negro success on Jewish success and the anti-Semitism of the militants are, at least in part, outgrowths of attitudes toward Washington.

Washington was born April 5, 1856, on the plantation of James Burroughs in Franklin County, Virginia; his mother, Jane, was the plantation cook. His father, Washington guessed, was a white man named Taliaferro, who lived nearby. Washington never knew for sure. He was seven years old when he was freed. Up until that time he had never worn shoes and his clothing had consisted of a series of cheap prickly long shirts made of left-over low-grade flax. Washington later recalled the scene of emancipation:

> In a company with my mother, brother and sister, and a large number of other slaves, I went to the master's house. All of our master's family were either standing or seated on the veranda . . .
>
> The most distinct thing I now recall in connection with the scene was that some man who seemed to be a stranger (a United States Officer, I presume) made a little speech and then read a rather long paper—The Emancipation Proclamation. . . . After the reading we were told that we were all free, and could go where we pleased. My mother . . . leaned over and kissed her children, while tears of joy ran down her cheeks . . . The wild rejoicing on the part of the emancipated colored people lasted but a brief period . . . The great responsibility of being free, of having charge of themselves, of having to

> think and plan for themselves and their children seemed to take possession of them.

It took possession of Washington, too, who even as a young boy dreamed of inspiring the sullen black multitudes toward a glory that would transfigure them. The image of the Hebrew patriarchs of the Old Testament was never far from his mind. In *The Farthest Man Down,* Washington wrote:

> The most fascinating portion of the Bible was the story of the manner in which Moses led the children of Israel out of the house of bondage, through the wilderness, into the Promised Land. I first heard that story from the lips of my mother, when both she and I were slaves . . . I have heard it repeated and referred to many times since. In fact I am certain that there is hardly a day or a week goes by that I do not meet among my people some reference to this same Bible story.
>
> The Negro slaves were always looking forward to a time when a Moses should arise from somewhere who would lead them, as he led the ancient Hebrews, out of the house of bondage. And after freedom, the masses of the Negro people have still continued to look to some great leader, some man inspired of God, who would lead them out of their difficulties into the promised land, which, somehow, they never seem to be able to reach.

In search of this new Canaan, Washington's mother took her three children to join their stepfather in the salt-mining town of Malden, West Virginia. It was there that Washington learned to read and discovered that education was the key to the door opening out on the world beyond slavery and serfdom.

But education was not an easy commodity to come by for an ex-slave youngster in rural West Virginia. "From the time I can remember having any thoughts about anything," he wrote, "I recall that I had an intense longing to

learn to read . . . soon after we got settled in some manner or other in our new cabin . . . I induced my mother to get hold of a book for me."

The volume procured was Webster's spelling book. It contained the alphabet and such phonetic letter combinations as *ab, ba* and *ca.* Washington memorized it all without understanding what it meant. Sometime later the impoverished Negro community of Malden managed to scrape together enough money to hire a teacher. Public education was not provided for colored children in this new state in the late 1860's, but after much pleading and finagling, Washington managed to get himself into class. It was in this school in the Kanawha Valley, when he was twelve or thirteen, that he chose his own surname—one that his entire family was quick to adopt. Until that moment in class when the teacher asked him for his last name, Washington related, he had never been called anything more than Booker. This unusual appellation was probably derived from the West African Hausa cry *Buka,* which means sonny or little boy. *Bukar* (pronounced Booker) is also one of the numerous North Nigerian derivatives of the Arab name of the first Caliph of Islam, Abu-Bukar, who succeeded Mohammed, and in Islamic areas of West Africa it is as common a cognomen as John is in English.

Having learned all that Malden could teach him, Washington headed east to Virginia's Hampton Institute, an agricultural, normal and industrial school for Negroes founded in 1868 by Francis Cardoza's New England sponsors, the abolitionist-inspired American Missionary Association. He walked much of the way and, ragged and penniless, arrived at his destination—only to be denied admission. Not until he had proved his perseverance by serving as a janitor was he admitted. He graduated in 1875, after three years, with a diploma and a compulsion for cleanliness that was to stay with him all of his life.

Upon the recommendation of Hampton's principal,

General Armstrong, Washington went to Alabama to head up a new school for rural Negroes. When he arrived at Tuskegee, however, he discovered that all the school consisted of was a one-year grant of two thousand dollars from the Alabama state legislature for teachers' salaries. Unaided, he recruited instructors and pupils. Borrowing five hundred dollars from his white mentor, General Armstrong, he bought a farm and converted it into a campus. He not only used the old family house and the barn, but the chicken coops as well, for classrooms and dormitories.

The purpose of the new school, as Washington saw it, was to span the immense chasm that separated the poverty-stricken, illiterate mass from the small minority of cultured, educated Negroes. He proposed to build this bridge with skilled artisans, efficient farmers and prosperous shopkeepers. The strategy of uplift was based on the idea of molding a black yeoman class which would in turn serve as a base for a black mercantile society. Without this economic ladder, Washington believed, his people could never climb high enough to reach for the political rights that had been snatched away from them after the Reconstruction ended.

Self-help, of course, did not originate with Washington. As early as 1790 free Negroes in the cities had banded together to provide education for their children, charity for the needy and burial plots for the dead. These fraternal orders, which went under such names as the Brotherly Association, the Friendly Union and the Friendly Moralist, were similar to the associations later developed by Eastern European Jewish immigrants. Washington's genius lay in translating this urban concept into a patois that the rural poor could understand. His luck lay in the fact that he spoke in an idiom that was soothing to white ears in both the North and the South.

When Tuskegee was founded in 1881, money was the issue, not equality. Northern capital was heavily invested in

the burgeoning Southern railroads and textile industries. Leading bankers and industrialists were willing to barter Negro rights for the privilege of operating peacefully in the South. Eagerly they sought a face-saving retreat from the Republicans' radical commitment to social equality. Washington's gospel of work and money and his rejection of politics and power was balm to the troubled spirits of the country's money-makers. There was in his attitude something familiar, something comfortable. It was reminiscent of the old Negro slave—servility with a smile. It gained for him, his school and his ideology wide support among whites in the North and South.

In his books and speeches Washington repeatedly stated that the Negroes in America should model themselves on the European Jewish community of the Diaspora, who through two millennia as social outcasts had produced a world of their own within the larger world. In such an enclosed society, with its own inner reality, Washington hoped to find dignity and self-respect.

Even such firebrands as Francis Cardoza were forced by the waves of reaction back onto Washington's doctrine of separatism. "The mere fact of segregation does not necessarily involve inferiority," Cardoza said in the 1880's, defending his position as a principal of an all-Negro high school in Washington, D.C. Then referring obliquely to the other side of his ancestry, more in hope than reason, he added, "The Jews have dissipated prejudice against themselves by devoting themselves to internal development."

To create this black new world, Washington was willing to play the white man's game—to demean himself and his race in order to accomplish what he thought his people needed. Therefore, he could never acknowledge that his leadership might possibly contain retrogressive side effects. Nor could he admit that what he preached sounded dangerously like acquiescence in second-class citizenship.

For example, in an effort to stop the abandonment of

public education for colored children in South Carolina, he wrote to Ben Tillman, an ignorant bigot who dominated that state's politics: "I am but a humble member of an unfortunate race; you are a member of the great intelligent Caucasian race . . . I cannot believe that you . . . are engaged in constructing laws that will keep 650,000 of my weak, dependent and unfortunate race in ignorance, poverty and crime."

Washington, however, eventually fell victim to his own game. In becoming so great a man, he intimidated many of the country's blacks, who yessed him as they did Mr. Charlie, without his ever being aware of it; they told him what he wanted to hear rather than what they thought and felt. Having based his career on the Negro's remaining immutably an agricultural people, Washington used to relate how the country folk would tell him how much they distrusted the city and how they would never leave the land. Nonetheless, the year of Washington's death, 1915, was the year the great migration to the cities of the North and West began. It has not yet ended.

Although historians characterize the years between 1880 and 1915 as the Negro nadir, Washington viewed them as a time of opportunity. In this, as in so many other things, he was right. It was not a time of endings but of beginnings. In this quarter of a century, despite its great political setbacks, the increase in Negro teachers, doctors, lawyers and businessmen was striking. Between the lumpen mass and the infinitesimal elite a black middle class emerged. The force of circumstances decreed in which direction the curve of this new society would be weighed. But there was certainly proof that the Negroes, too, could produce what Du Bois later came to call a "talented tenth." To take only one example: in 1900, there were only two Negro banks in the whole nation. Nine years later there were fifty.

What Washington set his hand against was the Negro's

notion, one that came with him out of slavery, that work was the symbol of degradation.

> The Negro came out of slavery with the idea that somehow or other the government, which freed him, was going to support and protect him, and that the great home of his race was in politics and in the ballot. The fact is that the colored people who went into politics after the Civil War were in most cases the aristocracy of the race, freed by their masters, who were their fathers, educated and frequently men of property, they had formed their lives and characters on the molds of the aristocratic Southerners . . . and believed that politics was the only sort of activity that was fit for a gentleman. . . . In the last decade the Negro has settled down to the task of building his own fortune and of gaining through thrift, through industry and through business, success which he had been denied in other directions . . . A large part of the work which the Tuskegee Institute does . . . is to show the masses of our people that in agriculture, in industry, in commerce and in the struggle toward economic success there are compensations."

This repeated denial of Negro political ambition, the negation of the need for social equality, along with the effort to instill pride in the Negro's performance of menial tasks, was bound to be irresistible to the Southerners with whom Washington was forced to deal. The spectacle of this handsome, broad-shouldered man with light green eyes playing the loyal, affable, sympathetic and jolly-tempered servant-inferior was also unquestionably flattering to the Northern industrialists whose money he sought for the expansion of Tuskegee. The approach was infallible because it reflected back to the white man a flattering image of himself and a diminished image of the Negro. The trick, as Dr. Bledsoe says in Ralph Ellison's novel *Invisible Man,* of how to "take these white folks where we want them to go" is to "show them what we want them to

see . . . The only way to please a white man is to tell him a lie . . . the kind of lie they want to hear . . . Yes, I had to act the nigger."

Even if Washington was never as cynical as Bledsoe, he surely knew when he went to Julius Rosenwald for money that the greatest bait he could offer was to place Rosenwald's name equally along with those of the great and famous white Anglo-Saxons who dominated the society and economy of the nation. When Rosenwald began his donations to Tuskegee he joined in a company that included William E. Dodge, Foster Peabody, Walter Page, J. G. Phelps-Stokes, Samuel P. Avery, C. P. Huntington, Charles Lanier, John Cadwallader, William Dean Howells, J. Pierpont Morgan and John D. Rockefeller. In the end his contributions to Negro causes outdid all the others. But even as Washington and Rosenwald were making their compact, the forces that were to produce the confrontation between Negroes and Jews were in the making. Jewish refugees from Eastern Europe were crowding into just those sections of the great Northern cities that would become a half century later Negro encampments.

In many ways, Julius Rosenwald tread a path of leadership for Jews that was analogous to Washington's for the Negro. He, too, was in the tradition of accommodation. The difference being that, for a Jew, accommodation meant assimilation; for a Negro, it signified separation. As Washington articulated a special bond between Negroes and Jews, Rosenwald viewed the Negro plight as a particularly Jewish concern. Speaking at a luncheon that he gave in Washington's honor at Chicago's elegant Blackstone Hotel, on Michigan Avenue, where Washington would ordinarily not have been served, Rosenwald said, "Whether it is because I belong to a people who have known centuries of persecution, or whether it is because I am naturally inclined to sympathize with the oppressed, I have always felt keenly for the colored race."

However, Rosenwald was candid enough to admit that he was attracted to the cause of the Negro, not by directly viewing his plight and relating it to that of his co-religionists in Europe, but by reading a book called *An American Citizen,* by William Henry Baldwin, Jr. Wishing to emulate Baldwin, he was responsive in 1911 to the solicitations of Booker T. Washington.

The problem that Baldwin presented, and with which Rosenwald identified, was the question of deporting Negroes. This was a frightening thought to a newly established Jew who in one generation made the leap from peddler's son to American aristocrat. Such a solution for any minority group was too reminiscent of the long nightmare of Jewish expulsions in Europe. Rosenwald could not help but be aware of the millennial history of the Jews in Europe: Chased first from England in 1290, next from Spain in 1492 and then all across the two hundred German-speaking duchies, principalities and kingdoms that comprised the Holy Roman Empire in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Jews had ended up bankrupt and humiliated in the prison confines of autocratic Czarist Russia.

"I think," said Rosenwald at this same luncheon held for Washington, "the question of deportation is unworthy of serious discussion . . . The single issue [is] that in some way the two races [white and Negro] must occupy one country. They have to learn probably the highest and hardest of all arts, the art of living together with decency and forebearance."

That Rosenwald's deep sense of Jewish identification was a significant factor in his embrace of the Negro cause is testified to in yet another speech in the same year made to the American Missionary Association, which founded Washington's old alma mater, Hampton Institute. Referring to the recurring persecution the Jews had known

from the pogroms, which had scarred the last years of Czarist Russia, Rosenwald said:

> Not only does the record of nations demonstrate beyond the question of doubt the folly of race prejudice, but its pages are filled with evidence that indulgence of this pet vice is itself a prime factor in the decay of nations, and in modern times. I believe Russia is a living example of that theory . . . In Russia the Jew is subject to a thousand infamous restrictions for no earthly reason except that he is a Jew and must be kept down. We Anglo-Saxons, of course, cry out against this as a barbarous outrage, and comment superiorly on the baseness of Russian civilization, and straightway turn around and exhibit the same qualities in our treatment of the Negro, which today is little less barbarous than is the treatment of the Jew in Russia . . . As an American and as a Jew, I appeal to all high-minded men and women to join in a relentless crusade against race prejudice.

Julius Rosenwald's life was an archetype of the white American dream, just as Washington's was cast in the classic mold of the black American. Born in Springfield, Illinois, Lincoln's hometown, in 1862, the year before Washington received his freedom, Rosenwald was the son of a German-Jewish immigrant peddler who had worked his way into the middle class. Rosenwald, unlike Washington, not only knew his father but took pride in his family history. His father, Samuel, was born in the Westphalian village of Bonde in 1828. He emigrated to the United States in 1854, along with half a million other citizens of the Germanies, to escape the oppressive reactionary atmosphere that dominated Central Europe in the mid-nineteenth century.

Disembarking from steerage in Baltimore with twenty dollars in his pocket, the twenty-six-year-old immigrant set out almost immediately as a peddler of men's clothing along the Old Winchester Trail in Virginia. Two years

later he had enough money to buy a horse and wagon to cart his wares, which came from the Hammerslough Brothers establishment in Baltimore. Shortly thereafter, he married into this merchant family and became the manager of a men's wear store for his brothers-in-law in Peoria, Illinois.

The making of the great Rosenwald fortune was typical of the nexus of familial relations that existed among immigrant Jewish families. It is precisely this resource of family that was denied Negroes by slavery. By the time of Julius' birth, his father, with the backing of his Hammerslough uncles, was the proprietor of a men's store in Springfield.

In 1879, when Julius went to New York as a merchant apprentice to one of his Hammerslough uncles, Washington was teaching school in Malden to pay his elder brother James's tuition at Virginia's Hampton Institute, of which he was now an alumnus. While Tuskegee was in its formative years and still a provincial Negro school, teetering precariously on the edge of insolvency, Rosenwald, with the backing of family funds and in partnership with a cousin in Chicago, opened a factory to produce men's summer suits.

In 1895, the year Washington delivered his famous upraised-hand speech at the Atlanta Exposition, Rosenwald bought into Sears Roebuck. Unlike Washington who, when he needed funds to create Tuskegee, was forced to borrow money from white outsiders, Rosenwald received immediate financial support from his family.

The difference between the Negro's and the Jew's position in the United States at the turn of the century was revealed by one of Rosenwald's most quoted remarks about the acquisition of great wealth. The formula, he said, was "ninety-five percent luck and five percent hard work." A Negro, however, could not then hope to be so lucky. Even today, despite the steady growth of a black business and professional middle class, there are no great Negro fortunes.

Although Rosenwald was never sure why he suddenly grew rich, Washington always knew exactly how he had become famous. The time was right for the ideas that propelled both men forward. In Washington's case, he alone, out of the pain of his past and the pressure of his ambition, lived out and articulated the doctrine of self-reliant accommodation. It was not Rosenwald, however, who devised the brilliant advertising and mail-order campaign that created the Sears Roebuck empire out of an unwanted consignment of gold-back watches. It was the telegrapher Richard Sears; Rosenwald was only an investor and manager in what was to become a multi-billion-dollar industry. He had, however, the intelligence, wit and grace to recognize the capricious nature of his good fortune and the desire to compensate others to whom no such opportunity would ever come.

By 1900 Rosenwald was well launched on his career as a philanthropist. Patronage has a long and honorable history in Western civilization, but America's contribution to the tradition is unique. Philanthropy is a relatively new development in this country. It grew out of the spectacular fortunes amassed by the rapid expansion of the American economy at the turn of the century. After the depression of the 1890's, the United States entered what some historians like to call a "golden age"—the results of the completion of continental railroads, of steam and electricity harnessed to industry, of mechanization and mass production. The boom was crude and magnificent, and for the first time in man's history it created an economy of surplus. The founders of these fabulous new fortunes had for the most part started their careers as poor immigrants or as sons of immigrants. The leap to native aristocracy was so swift that it was necessary to formulate instant customs to go with the new roles. The tradition created was one of lordly, even regal, beneficence.

Rosenwald's original charities had been typical of those of the Jewish bourgeois gentleman—the synagogue, Jewish

hospitals, community organizations. Not until almsgiving became the major occupation of his life did he reach out to the Negro, emulating some of the oldest and most aristocratic New England families. Unlike Washington, whose life, work and commitment were of one piece, there was in Rosenwald's case a sharp line between his charitable instincts and his business practices. In matters of economics outside the realm of philanthropy, he was a confirmed conservative.

This desire not only to imitate but to be accepted as part of the American establishment created an interesting identity dilemma for Rosenwald, a dilemma that he never resolved.

Unlike the early Sephardic Jewish Gratz, Lopez and Seixas families, or such latter-day German-Jewish immigrant stock as August Belmont and the Goldwaters of Arizona, who intermarried and abandoned the faith of their fathers, Rosenwald had no desire to hide his Jewishness.

He was, he claimed, a Jew by religion and an American by nationality. Although he was willing, even eager, to help poor Jews all over the world, including those who had immigrated to Palestine, he refused to support a Jewish national home. His refusal was bred out of a fear of the consequences such a "dual alliance" would have on the position of the Jews in the United States. To paraphrase Washington's simile, Rosenwald's philosophy might be summed up thus: in all things religious as separate as the fingers, but as the hand in things pertaining to citizenship.

The Jews, of course, were not the only Americans faced with the dilemma of identity. This question has at one time or another, in greater or lesser degree, plagued all minority groups, but to none has it proved more of a perplexity than to the Jews and the Negroes. American Negroes, too, have toyed with the idea of repatriation; in their case, to an African homeland.

Repatriation, Back to Africa, Black Nationalism and Pan-Africanism are analogous politically and emotionally to Zionism. They represent similar responses to the peculiar problem of identity, a problem posed by being a member of a distinguishable nonassimilable or nonassimilating minority group.

Just as Julius Rosenwald was forced by the Zionist movement to formulate a position on Jewishness, Washington had to take a stand on negritude in relationship to the questions aroused by the existence of Liberia. Washington, like Rosenwald, believed that Americans must aid their less fortunate overseas brethren. "The bond of color," he said, "is especially strong in the case of the black man . . . When African Negroes succeed it helps American Negroes. The progress of the American Negro contributes to the progress of the African Negro." Like Rosenwald, Washington stopped short of repatriation. "It has often occurred to me," he declared, "that people who talk of removing the Negro from the Southern states and colonizing him in some distant part of the world do not reflect how deeply he is rooted to the soil."

Neither, of course, could foresee the future. Nor could they know that history would brush aside or make irrelevant many of their concerns. The Nazi massacre of six million Jews made urgent the creation of the state of Israel to house the refugees of the Holocaust whom no other nation would accept. The overthrow of European colonialism, the emergence of the independent black nations of Africa, combined with the American in-migration and the leapfrogging growth of affluence, invalidated Booker T. Washington's compromise and created an irresistible pressure toward equal rights for Negroes.

Nonetheless, the partnership between these two outdated figures was fruitful. Washington, in seeking out Rosenwald, attempted to establish a relationship between Jews and Negroes. It was on his side inspired by Biblical

images and sociological reality. Rosenwald, in responding to this plea, immediately made the identification between the status of the American Negro and the European Jew. He also articulated the philosophy that underlies the attitude of all national Jewish organizations toward the Negro. The dictum is that discrimination against one minority group is bad for all minority groups: in essence the battle for Negro rights is the battle for Jewish rights. The lesson of Cain had been learned. The Jew was to be his black brother's keeper.

5

THE PATRIARCHS

DESPITE Rosenwald's patronage, Jews, though ready to call the black man brother, were not yet ready to consider him a social equal. Even as late as 1911, the Jewish-owned *New York Times* declared, "There can be no universal melting pot. The consciousness of physical kind persists." Unfortunately for these aristocratic journalists the net of discrimination, designed to catch and hold all but the native WASP, ensnared them too.

No matter how ardently they wished to be just white Americans, Jews found themselves aligned with Negroes in the battles to end restrictive housing covenants and in the struggle for equal educational and employment opportunities and the end of discriminatory employment practices. Of the initial civil rights organizations, three—the B'nai B'rith, the American Jewish Committee and the American Jewish Congress—were originated by Jews to help Jews; one, the National Association for the Ad-

vancement of Colored People, was formed to aid Negroes. Unlike the Jewish agencies, which were originated by Jews, the NAACP was not founded by blacks but by whites, some of whom were Jews. Only one of its original officers was a Negro; this singular man, a coffee-colored aristocrat with a trim Vandyke beard and curled mustache, was William Edward Burghardt Du Bois, whose image dominated the organization's formative years.

Born in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, three years after the end of the Civil War, Du Bois was the son of a ne'er-do-well near-white father and a mother of Dutch-African descent. Du Bois' childhood friends were not the few poor Negro boys of the town but the sons of middle-class old-stock New Englanders, who taught him to dislike working-class Irish and Germans. It was only gradually in "days of secret tears" that he learned of his own "misfortune." Like a Jewish child in a gentile neighborhood, he discovered that he was different—irremediably different. To compensate for this private despair, he began his public exhortations for race betterment. They were given their first airing when Du Bois, at fifteen, became the local correspondent for the Negro *New York World Globe*. Even in these juvenile efforts the two other themes that were to thread their way through the fabric of his life could be discerned: Negro nationalism and the American promise of equality.

At Harvard he was presented not only with a Ph.D. in sociology but with a challenge to his identity, a challenge with which he grappled without resolution for the rest of his life. As an adolescent in a white New England town or an undergraduate at Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, his loyalty had been with the seemingly solid black community. But in the interracial circles in Cambridge he once more gained access to white society. In addition he became a part of Boston's Negro elite, where status was defined by shade of complexion. In these cultivated worlds Du Bois was not a black but a tan.

His ideas on black nationalism were disparaged by his friends, who attempted to convince him that as a mulatto he need have no concern for darker men North or South. Though Du Bois never gave in to this temptation, its pull left him emotionally stranded. Alternating between hope and despair, he was a separationist and an integrationist, both alienated and activist. By turns an American patriot, a zealot of Pan-Africanism, and a dogmatic Marxist, his passion was typical of that of the twentieth-century intellectual.

Paradoxically this man, who was so closely identified with the first interracial civil rights organization that laid the basis of the Negro-Jewish alliance, was never at one either with himself or his people. In his never-ending fights over principle and squabbles over personality, his firmest supporter was the NAACP's long-time Jewish president, Joel Spingarn, a fellow academician. Yet Du Bois had a deep hostility toward the Jewish stereotype. In his classic book, *Souls of Black Folk,* he repeatedly stigmatized the Jew as unscrupulous and merciless. "Only a Jew," he wrote, "could squeeze more blood from debt-cursed tenants."

This projection, which owed its origin more to his Yankee upbringing than to his Negro heritage, contrasted markedly with Booker T. Washington's awe of the Jews. It was, however, only one of the many ways that Du Bois differed from Washington. Only twelve years younger than Washington, Du Bois was more than a generation removed from him in attitude. If Washington was the great black father, Du Bois was surely the rebellious son who assumed the patriarchal mantle when Washington died and molded it to fit a new age.

The roots of their now-famous quarrel go back to the resentment of a free-born man seeing himself cast in the role of a humble supplicant. For the struggle between Washington and Du Bois was not over power, though Washington wrongly believed this to be the issue, but over

image. The Negro, Du Bois declared with bold fury, was not a happy simpleton servant waiting forever on the white man's whim, but a creator of violent discontent bordering on open revolt.

During all of his ninety-five years Du Bois, unlike Washington, never fought for concrete objectives, a particular new school, an individual law or a specific job. Rather, he was obsessively interested in the way his people looked not only to themselves but to the white world. Appearances were, to this elegantly dressed man, of the greatest importance. Personal vanity was projected outward onto his race. "It is a peculiar sensation," he wrote in *Souls of Black Folk,* "this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the type of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels the two-ness—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings, two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder."

Honed against Washington's accommodationist view of the Negro, Du Bois openly demanded social and political equality along with economic opportunity. With a public fervor that contrasted oddly with the iciness of his private manner, Du Bois accused Washington of asking black people to "give up . . . political power . . . civil rights . . . and higher education." Du Bois insisted that Washington bear responsibility for "the disenfranchisement of the Negro, the creation of a distinct status of civil inferiority for the Negro, and the steady withdrawal of aid from institutions for the higher training of Negroes." In short, Du Bois held Washington personally responsible for the whole disaster of the counter-Reconstruction.

Washington's doctrine, he said, "has tended to make the whites, North and South, shift the burden of the Negro problem to the Negro's shoulders and stand aside as critical and rather pessimistic spectators when, in fact, the burden belongs to the nation." Washington, always sensi-

tive about his lack of academic credentials, snapped back with innumerable none-too-subtle deprecating references to "a young man living in a hovel, dressed in grease spattered clothes, but busily studying a French Grammar" and repeated his cautionary homile of "the Negro boy who went to hell in the big city after receiving the kind of education that caused him to lose interest in his father's farm."

This Negro fraternal conflict was not entirely without precedent. It would seem almost to be a law of group dynamics that the more fierce the outside repression, the more intense the internal struggle. Negroes, having experienced three and a half decades of freedom and tasted briefly of legal equality and political opportunity, had developed at least a semblance of community. Like other beleaguered peoples, they could not accept the fact that they were powerless to impede early twentieth-century backlash. Unable to hold off their true oppressors, they attacked each other.

The current disarray of the civil rights and black power movements with their warring factions is a replay of this older battle and mirrors not so much a fight for the Negro soul as a feeling of powerlessness at the sullen refusal of the majority of the whites to accept black Americans as equals.

Looking past Washington for inspiration to the memory of the fierce Negro abolitionist Frederick Douglass, Du Bois launched the Niagara Movement, calling twenty-nine members of the black intelligentsia to secret meetings at Fort Erie, Ontario, in the summer of 1905. He hammered out a platform for the new Negro in which he castigated Washington's leadership and principle of accommodation and called for "the abolition of all caste distinctions based simply on race and color." Significantly, this vanguard of the civil rights movement showed no concern with the ethnic and religious bars that discriminated against Jews, although they did demand "recognition of

the principles of human brotherhood as a practical present creed."

As many as eight hundred Negroes attended in 1909, the second Niagara conference, which was held at Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, in honor of John Brown. The movement, which led directly to the formation of the white-inspired NAACP, did not prosper because Du Bois was a rebel not a founder, an intellectual not an organizer. Prickly, aloof, hypersensitive and formal in his friendships, many of his supporters claimed he was a snob. Even his enemies never accused him of being a politician. He was instead a propagandist and a prophet. Fatally for all Du Bois-launched movements, he mistook his own words for deeds and proclamations for actions. And both were nearly always ahead of their time.

All of the white world, however, was not indifferent to the repression of the Negroes nor unsympathetic to those few who struggled for simple human dignity. Alarmed by the precipitous rise in lynchings, from a hundred in 1901 to nearly a thousand in 1909, and the escalation of individual killings into full-scale riots, the leaders of the old Abolitionist army joined together with conscience-stricken Jews to offer assistance to the new Negroes.

The catalytic incident was the Springfield, Illinois, riot of 1908. It was the first large-scale anti-Negro onslaught to take place in the North, and the fact that it occurred in Lincoln's native city, where his home was a shrine, reenforced its poignancy and its horror. The charge of assault launched by a hysterical white woman against an unidentified Negro man (a charge later retracted) electrified the hot muggy August atmosphere of the sleepy Illinois capital. Groups of toughs gathered in the spirit of Georgia rednecks and attacked Negroes in the street. Hoards of otherwise quiescent whites poured into the black sections of the city, plundering and spreading terror. One victim of the mob was an eighty-four-year-old Negro

man who was strung up to a lamppost for the crime of having married a white woman thirty years before.

One journalist, William English Walling, writing in the photo-news magazine *The Independent,* not only rendered a gory detailed description of the affair but challenged his readers "to win Liberty and Justice for the Negro." The appeal was answered by social worker Mary White Ovington; Dr. Henry Moskowitz, a member of the New York Jewish establishment; and newspaper editor Oswald Garrison Villard. Villard, who ran the New York *Evening Post,* was a grandson of the abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison and a former supporter of Booker T. Washington. He had become disillusioned with Washington's attempts to muzzle the Negro press and discourage Negro cries for equality. Rallying a group of whites, he called the first public meeting of the National Negro Committee for the centenary of Lincoln's birth on February 12, 1909. The joining of this new committee with the remnants of the old Niagara Movement resulted in the birth of the NAACP.

Du Bois was its first Negro officer and its first salaried employee. Taking the New York–based post of Director of Research and Publicity, he was finally able to leave Atlanta, a city he disliked and where he had taught for ten years after completing his graduate work at Harvard. In all the time he had lived in Georgia, he had never adjusted to being a pariah. He refused to ride on the segregated trollies and buses, attend the segregated theaters, or sit on park benches reserved for "colored only." When his infant son died, Du Bois and his wife had ridden north in the segregated trains with the little coffin on their laps to bury him in New England.

Du Bois founded and edited *The Crisis,* the NAACP's monthly magazine which spoke to and for the nation's educated Negroes, alternately urging upon them the cultural pluralism and racial self-consciousness that Washing-

ton had for so long tried to suppress. In the years between the death of Washington in 1915 and the rise of Marcus Garvey in 1921, Du Bois stood for the dignity of the Negro, and it was his emphasis on the importance of the image of equality that initially dominated NAACP strategy.

Starting with this concern, the agency bitterly attacked the nearly universal practice of identifying criminals by race. Villard used all of his influence in the journalistic circles and managed, in 1912, to get the Associated Press to stop filing stories headlined "Negro Steals Clock" or "Black Thug Waylays Teacher."

In 1913 the Anti-Defamation League was created by the B'nai B'rith, the nation's largest Jewish fraternal organization, to combat just such calumnies. The problem of the "Hebrews," as the newspapers called them when they were caught in unsavory acts, was further complicated by the fact that in 1908, New York City's popular police commissioner, Theodore A. Bingham, declared Jews to be a criminal class.

Separately but equally, Negroes and Jews fought such designations. Individually and collectively they trod the thin line that separates censorship from defamation as they sought to keep the mass media free from the pollution of unflattering and dangerous racial and religious stereotypes. For if Negroes and Jews were ever to be accepted, they must perceive and present themselves in ways that would minimize their differences from the WASP ideal and maximize their similarities.

In the first half of the twentieth century the fantasy vision of the world as it should be and once was, was created in Hollywood. In these daydreams, heroes and heroines alike were cast in the mold of the native-born White Anglo-Saxon Protestant. All other groups were portrayed as villains, servants or figures of fun. The flickering images reflected on the screens of the movie houses mesmerized millions, and thus it was not surprising that the

NAACP's first attack was launched against this industry. The object of their censure was the "spectacular" *The Birth of a Nation* by D. W. Griffith in which the Negro leaders of the Reconstruction were depicted as venal and corrupt, while the Ku Klux Klan was represented as a band of knights bent on protecting Southern honor and womanhood.

Blowing up Dixie's favorite obsession, one of the film's major sequences showed a sexually depraved Negro in rapine pursuit of a beautiful white damsel, who, rather than succumb, jumped off a cliff. Fearful of the consequences the exhibition of such a film would have in a year when lynchings were reaching frightening heights, the NAACP quietly sought to have the most inflammatory footage cut out. When diplomacy failed, the organization launched a campaign of public protest. It was one of the first widely publicized protest actions in the United States to defend the name of a minority group. Joining the picket lines were such Negro notables as Francis Cardoza and Adam Clayton Powell, Sr.

The protest was futile, and the movies continued to cast Negroes as sub-humans. But even more prevalent than the criminals were the characterizations of the slow-witted, slow-footed step-'n-fetchit servants, the jolly rotund black mammies and the happy Bojangles minstrels. In contrast, the movies produced no spectacular around the Jewish stereotype, but one of its staple commodities was the "Jew Comedy," which it took over from vaudeville. These shorts featured an array of characters including Moe the fence, Greenstein, Moneybags Solomon, Sam Lowenstein the railroad raider, and Jew Rosenstein the diamond smuggler.

Whenever a producer wished to depict a betrayer of public trust, a hard-boiled usurious money-lender, a crooked gambler, a grafter, a depraved fire-bug, a white slaver or other villains, the Anti-Defamation League noted at the time, "the actor was directed to represent himself

as a Jew." To make sure the audience got the point, the actor employed every stereotypical device available from a puttied hawk nose to greasy earlocks and a long sloppy coat.

Unlike the NAACP, the ADL was able in 1916 to get a Chicago exhibitor to refuse to show a defamatory film called *Rebecca's Wedding Day*. Other theater owners followed suit. The ADL's success was undoubtedly influenced by the fact that a great number of theater owners were Jewish. In this way, as in so many others, American Jews were better able to defend themselves than were Negroes.

The first Negro success came ten years later in 1926, and it concerned integrated housing. In that year O. H. Sweet, a Negro physician, moved into a house in a white middle-class neighborhood in Detroit. He was greeted by stones, curses and the sound of gunfire. Terrified, a member of his family fired into the milling mob outside the house, and a white man was killed. The Sweets were arrested and charged with first-degree murder. They were defended by Clarence Darrow, a member of the NAACP's Legal Defense Committee. Darrow argued that the Sweet case involved race prejudice not murder. "If," Darrow said, "white men had shot and killed a black while protecting their homes and lives against a mob of blacks, no one would have dreamed of indicting them. They would have given medals instead." The jury found the Sweets not guilty.

The Sweet case was only one in a series of legal actions that continue through the present day to secure the elemental rights of Negroes. When the NAACP started its work there were signs throughout the Midwest that said "Niggers, Read and Run." Elmwood, Indiana's, approach was more subtle: its sign read, "No Negroes Admitted Here." Towns like Granite City, Illinois, and Owosso, Michigan, posted no bans but they made it impossible for Negroes to purchase land or homes. In cities that legally

permitted Negroes to purchase homes, local custom and poverty restricted them, as it still does, to the slums. Eventually some Negro families accumulated enough capital and courage to buy or build decent houses in good neighborhoods, but they were frequently greeted by municipal segregation ordinances.

Restricted housing laws were in force prior to World War I in Dallas, Atlanta, St. Louis, Richmond and Baltimore. In many instances Jews, too, were excluded. After World War I, opposition to Jewish residential integration was encountered in such places as Sharon, Connecticut, where in 1922 the Sharon Chamber of Commerce distributed a leaflet urging property owners not to sell to Jews. Two years later the secretary of the Chamber of Commerce of St. Petersburg, Florida, in a speech before the local Kiwanis Club, said that "the time has come to draw the line against all foreigners and make this a one hundred percent American and Gentile city"; and the Sea Island Company of Georgia advertised that no Jews would be permitted to buy property in its development.

Because of these actions, Jews were quick to join Negro organizations in combating restrictive covenants. Among the most renowned of the NAACP volunteer lawyers was Louis Marshall, who successfully defeated a housing restriction against Negroes in Washington, D.C., "in the hope that it may incidentally benefit Jews." Marshall, a small rotund man who wore a frock coat reminiscent of a Dickens character, was known as the Attorney General of the Jews. He was a strange man to have ended up as a champion of civil rights. The son of a German-born hide importer, Louis Marshall was born in Syracuse, New York, in the same year as Booker T. Washington. He was legalistic by nature, but in his personal relations he was tyrannical.

The apocrypha that has sprung up about him shows just how different Jewish aspirations were from those of the majority culture. In his memoirs John Mumford, an up-

state New York lawyer, paints a portrait of Marshall as the exemplary Jewish boy of the ages. Describing a scene in the Syracuse library, Mumford wrote, "a small earnest Jewish boy got up from a nook in a corner," and walking up to a famous judge, who was loudly discussing a legal problem with a colleague, offered his assistance. "I think," said Marshall, blinking, "I can get you a copy of what you want. It's J. B. Moore's report . . ." The two deans sat looking at each other—in what can only be imagined as an awed double-take.

From such auspicious beginnings Marshall went on to become one of the country's most successful corporation lawyers. Like Washington, he was deeply conservative, and like Du Bois, he had a literal faith in the United States Constitution. "It is," he said, "a holy of holies, an instrument of sacred import . . . Let no unhallowed hands be laid upon it."

The unholy hands that Marshall was forever swatting at belonged to the government. As a conservative Republican, he was both morally and professionally opposed to child labor laws, state minimum wage acts, workmen's compensation, and prohibition. He believed all these to be infringements on the private rights guaranteed by the Constitution. Tempering this overwhelming conservatism was the fact that he was a Jew. Like his co-religionists he responded to the traumas of his people: the Kishinev pogroms of 1903 and 1905, the Leo Frank lynching of 1913, automobile manufacturer Henry Ford's publication of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* in 1920, and the end of open European immigration in 1924.

Marshall, along with other successful German Jews, founded the American Jewish Committee in 1906 to speak for American Jews against Russian persecution. It was the nation's first civil rights organization and it has in the past two decades spent a good part of its time, money and energy fighting for Negro causes. The Committee was

founded by old-line Jewish establishment figures. Although it fought hard and successfully, it eschewed publicity, protest and politics, preferring instead to work indirectly through the personal friendships and influence of its members. Marshall was a frequent negotiator in these velvet-glove operations.

The private self-assurance and public timidity of the Committee in the early days sprang from a genuine insecurity about their group's place in American society. The Jews led by Marshall, like the Negroes led by Washington, believed they should be neither seen nor heard, but should be represented nonetheless. Each member of the Committee saw himself as an emissary to the gentile power structure. But even their personal egotism was tainted by the fear that if Jews or Negroes called special attention to themselves, they would lose whatever privileges they then possessed. The members of the Committee began by believing that minority rights could not be gained by open political pressure; but later events forced Marshall to change his mind and come openly into the political arena. Jews have been there ever since.

In 1832 the United States and Russia signed a treaty that guaranteed American citizens the right to conduct business in Russia on condition that they submit to prevailing ordinances and laws. After the second Kishinev pogrom in 1905, American Jews were denied visas by the Czarist government, which also refused to recognize the right of repatriation of either Jewish or gentile American emigrants. Elihu Root, Theodore Roosevelt's Secretary of State, countered this by stating that he would no longer issue passports to former Russian subjects unless the Russian government granted the visas and allowed repatriation.

The inner circle of the American Jewish Committee, of which Marshall was a leader, called on President Roosevelt and asked him to revoke the treaty altogether. Roose-

velt was sympathetic but wary—1908 was an election year. The President's protégé, William Howard Taft, privately pledged repeal if he should be elected.

When Taft failed to meet his commitment after three years in the Executive seat, the American Jewish Committee, with Marshall's support, took their campaign for abrogation into the open. Congressmen of both parties were canvassed and presentations were made at Republican and Democratic platform committees, while individual Jews were urged to write their legislators. Congress, reacting to the mounting pressure and aware of the strategic location of Jewish voters, passed a joint resolution advocating abrogation. The President finally acted.

Emboldened, the Jews moved on to the state houses. In 1913, after years of lobbying, Marshall was able to report that the New York General Assembly had passed a civil rights bill prohibiting discrimination not only in advertising but in "public accommodations and places of public entertainment." The moving force, he confided to friends, was the lawmakers' fear of electoral reprisal from the state's 850,000 Jews.

Negroes, faced with similar problems, too, found similar solutions. It was not Washington, however, who led the way; he remained a courtier until his dying day. It was Du Bois. Challenging Washington and the party of Lincoln, Du Bois declared in 1908 that "Negroes owe nothing to the Republicans. The Party never truly opposed slavery. Negroes were enfranchised to serve as tools of politicians. Though the Republicans have controlled the three branches of the national government for decades, racism is allowed to flourish." As final proof Du Bois, staring coldly ahead of him, said, "Negroes have been ejected from Republican party caucuses." Of Taft he said, "It is hard to imagine worse." In the end he advocated supporting the Democratic candidate, William Jennings Bryan.

Mindful of the abuse he would receive for standing

with a man whose major support lay in the South, Du Bois pointed out that the Democratic liberal economic program would benefit Negroes; by supporting liberal Northern Democrats, Negroes, Du Bois believed, could pry them away from the conservative Southern wing of the party. Using an argument that now sounds familiar, he urged Negroes to use their vote to gain their rights. Negroes, he said, could hold the balance of power in a close election, for they had the ability "to deliver with ease New York, New Jersey, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois as well as to create the possibility of victory in a dozen other states." However, it was not until the presidential election of 1932, some twenty-four years later, that the mass of Negroes had a reason to follow Du Bois' advice and support Northern Democrats. Ironically, by that time Du Bois had lost all interest in bourgeois politics and had started on his long leftward course, which was to culminate in 1962, when he officially joined the Communist party at the age of ninety-three.

But by 1936, for better or for worse, Negroes and Jews had entered the mainstream of American politics. Their economic and social concerns forced them both into the Democratic party. In the late 1940's and throughout the 1950's they found themselves openly working together to produce the first body of civil rights legislation since the Civil War. The days of brotherhood had begun.

6

DAYS OF BROTHERHOOD

The alliance between Negroes and Jews was solidified in August 1945 when NAACP and American Jewish Congress lawyers began working together. It lasted just ten years, until 1954, when the Supreme Court handed down its historic decision on school desegregation. According to square-jawed Jewish attorney Will Maslow, however, it was only a marriage of convenience.

"The truth," he said, fingering his pipe ritualistically during an interview in the late sixties, "is that you can't fight discrimination against one minority group without fighting it against others. It was logical for Jews and Negroes to cooperate." He paused, then added, "Besides it was in our interest to help them. We had the staff, the money and the political muscle to do it."

In the mid 1940's the nation's fourteen million Negroes had only one civil rights agency, the NAACP, to protect the black man in the courts and to further his interests in

the country's legislative halls; and that agency had on its staff but one full-time lawyer—Thurgood Marshall. The Urban League did not then engage in civil rights agitation. The Jewish population, only a third the size of the black population and infinitely richer, was represented by three agencies: the American Jewish Committee, the Anti-Defamation League, and the American Jewish Congress, which Maslow now leads.

Although Maslow was unwilling to say so directly, he implied that Jews helped Negroes more than Negroes ever helped Jews—a fact that rankles many Jews but makes Maslow proud. When the Congress (as the American Jewish Congress is known in contradistinction to the older, more sedate American Jewish Committee, which is called the Committee) started working with the NAACP, it had seven full-time lawyers. This was, however, seven more lawyers than the Justice Department had assigned to civil rights. "Negro leaders welcomed Jewish cooperation then," Maslow reminisced.

Actually the coalition that finally battered down legalized segregation was a conglomeration of all the dissenting minority forces in the country. The NAACP and the Congress merely formed the central axis around which swung such diverse groups as the American Civil Liberties Union, the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Japanese-American Citizens League, the Anti-Defamation League, the National Lawyers Guild and the AFL-CIO. The coalition spearheaded the campaign for anti-discrimination statutes and Fair Employment Practices legislation on local, state and national levels. "But," Maslow interposed, "many of these laws were actually written in the offices of Jewish agencies, by Jewish staff people, introduced by Jewish legislators and pressured into being by Jewish voters. In addition, literally hundreds of court actions were taken by Jewish attorneys on behalf of Negro plaintiffs."

For a number of years the American Jewish Congress and the NAACP jointly published an annual report on

civil rights in America. Among the topics discussed in its pages were Negro lynchings in Irvin, Georgia; attacks on Jews, Negroes and communists in Peekskill, New York; cross burnings and Klan floggings; police brutality, anti-miscegenation laws, racist and religious immigration restrictions; the poll tax; trade union discrimination against Negroes, and discrimination in public accommodations, the armed forces and voluntary associations. When Negroes fought against lily-white Texas primary elections in 1944, Jewish lawyers pitched in to establish the principle that "a party election was a public not private affair."

The incident that Maslow believes illustrates the alliance at its best concerned the Stuyvesant Town housing project in Manhattan. Shortly after the war the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, acting as a developer in an urban renewal project, constructed the middle-income housing complex. The site for the buildings had been acquired by the state's power of condemnation and it received a tax exemption from the city of New York. Notwithstanding the quasi-public nature of its financing, the management refused to admit three Negro veterans seeking apartments. Quickly coming to the defense of the veterans were the NAACP, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the Commission on Law and Social Action, a subdivision of the Congress then headed by Maslow. The case was fought through the lower courts and was finally decided in favor of the veterans.

Unlike Julius Rosenwald, who was interested in Negro causes only as an adjunct to his philanthropic avocation, or Louis Marshall, who made the fight against discrimination an extracurricular cause, Maslow was for a decade a full-time professional in civil rights. Motivated by a Hebraic conscience, Maslow was as nearly bred to the battle as any Jew can be. Unconcerned with gaining the acceptance of the WASP upper class, he pursued equalitarianism with calm conviction.

Maslow came to the United States from Russia at the age of six. He studied economics as an undergraduate at Cornell and hoped to teach in a university, but he went into law instead when he discovered the prejudice that existed in academe in the late 1920's. The duality of Maslow's childhood was best described by the famous humane publicist, Hutchinson Hapgood, in a description of a Lower East Side youth of the early nineteen hundreds. "The boy's nature," Hapgood wrote, "is strongly appealed to by both the old and the new . . . He is keenly sensitive to the charm of his American environment with its practical and natural opportunities, he has still a deep love for his race and the old things. He is aware and rather ashamed of the limitations of his parents. He feels the trend and the weight of things are against them . . . yet in a real way the old people remain his conscience . . ."

"My uncle," Maslow said, "is Ben-Gurion and I come from a Jewish socialist-labor background." It is from this combination of economic radicalism, utopian humanitarianism, and Zionist orthodoxy that many, if not most, of the Jewish intellectuals of the civil rights movement came. Barred not only by birth but by intellectual conviction from the aristocratic uptown German-Jewish society, Maslow sought to shape in his own image a new Jewish establishment of the sons and daughters of Eastern European Jews. To the extent that he has been able to get the American Jewish Congress to accept economic and social concepts (such as full, not just fair, employment) that reach beyond parochial Jewish interests, he has succeeded. The more interesting question is how a Jew was able to make his way in the world by working for Negro rights in a bourgeois Jewish community agency. It took thirteen years to arrive at the answer. The changing style of American society and the new mode of Jewish community life contributed greatly to the success, as did the shift of population away from town and country to the city. On this new stage Jews and even Negroes were able to appear in

public for the first time, brought together by the Depression and World War II.

The dramatic nature of the nation's economic collapse in the 1930's necessitated national rather than local solution. To feed the hungry, house the homeless, and employ the jobless, help was needed from Washington. Roosevelt responded by creating a number of social agencies, one of which had Will Maslow on its staff. Between 1937 and 1943 Maslow served as a hearing commissioner for the National Labor Relations Board, and afterward he worked for the federal Fair Employment Practices Committee.

Matching President Roosevelt's precedent-shattering willingness to grant power and position to minority groups was his wife's open sympathy for Negro and Jewish causes. This concern was reflected not only in Eleanor Roosevelt's public acts but in her private life. Her championship of Marian Anderson in 1939, after the Negro contralto had been barred from Constitution Hall because of her race, had the effect of an official rebuke to discrimination.

The new spirit of liberality that characterized the government affected public opinion as well. Unlike Woodrow Wilson's New Freedom, Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal drew no caste lines, and Negroes were included in the social programs designed to aid the nation. Although no specific civil rights legislation was passed during Roosevelt's tenure, social security, unemployment compensation, minimum wage and hour laws, public health programs and relief payments all aided black citizens.

The Second World War created, as did the First, new opportunities for Negro employment. A shortage of manpower made black social mobility possible; and, oddly enough, the war itself did much to dilute prejudice against Negroes as well as Jews. Immigration had been shut off for fifteen years when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. The Americanized sons, and even the grandsons,

of the old immigrants had come of age, and thus Jews, along with Poles, Slovaks and Italians, were no longer visible in the way that their fathers and grandfathers had been. The old clothes had been discarded along with the strictures of old language, customs and loyalties. Ethnic associations remained strong but association with the old country was weaker.

The white Anglo-Saxon Protestant ideal remained, but for the American, prejudice became vulnerable. The creed of equality that was used to counter Nazi racist ideology gained wide acceptance on the home front. The WASP super-patriots found it ever harder to cling to both hundred-percent Americanism and anti-Semitism: being against Jews smacked of being for the Nazis. Public opinion polls taken during the war consistently showed greater prejudice against trade-union leaders than Jews, and concomitant with this, ideological racism even against Negroes was disparaged.

The side effects of the war against Nazism made it possible for Negroes to believe that the American Dream might even include them. Impatient with segregation in the armed services and grudging concessions in wartime jobs, A. Philip Randolph, the founder of the first Negro union—the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters—organized a march on Washington. It was probably the most influential event that ever didn't take place. It was the first instance of successful mass Negro pressure in the political arena.

As conceived by Randolph, the Florida-born son of an itinerant Methodist preacher, the march would bring thousands of angry Negroes to the Capital to protest. The idea caught on and was supported by the NAACP, the Urban League, civic, church, trade-union and educational groups. It became, in fact, a movement of great emotional force. Mass meetings were held in Chicago and in New York's Madison Square Garden in an attempt to rally the marchers.

Roosevelt, fearful of the consequences of such a gathering in the segregated Southern city of Washington, began negotiations with Randolph. In return for calling off the march, he issued Executive Order 8802 forbidding discrimination in employment in companies holding defense contracts. To oversee this order, he appointed a Fair Employment Practices Committee of which Will Maslow was a member.

"In 1943, I became Director of Field Operations," Maslow recalls. "It was my first real contact with the problems of discrimination against Negroes. It was while I was working with the Committee that I got to know the real heroes of the civil rights movement—Robert Weaver, Roy Wilkins and Thurgood Marshall."

The fact that Maslow was selected continued a pattern of appointing Jews to public bodies concerned with Negro problems. Even as early as 1919, when the mayor of Chicago wanted to investigate race riots in that city, he appointed Jews to his committee. "Jew" came to mean "Negro" in officialdom, and he was perceived as the white black man. Freud, in referring to a similar psychological mechanism in regard to sex, called the phenomenon "displacement upward."

In the wake of World War II came the G.I. Bill, which helped millions of young men from lower- and middle-class homes to learn new trades and skills or to obtain a higher education. The G.I. Mortgage Program made homeowners of men who had spent their lives as renters, and a large number of Negroes were among those who took advantage of these benefits.

The tempo of the great trek north by Southern Negroes now speeded up. The votes of these new immigrants were eagerly sought by the big city political machines, and thus a multiracial society was in the making. To ease its birth pains, interracial agencies and commissions were established in the Northern and Western cities and states. These bodies quickly became appendages of the liberal

establishment. Seats on their boards and positions on their staffs became desirable, for they gave status to the holders. The Jewish leadership that garnered this harvest developed a vested interest in the problems of the Negro: the espousal of civil rights and brotherhood was not only morally satisfying, it was socially rewarding.

The very model of a modern intergroup agency is the Philadelphia Fellowship Commission, founded in 1944. Its Board of Directors reads like a Who's Who in the city. Initiated by a coalition of white Protestant lawyers, bankers, socialites and prominent Jews, and leavened with a sprinkling of Negro professionals, it has from the beginning been operated by a Jewish executive director, Maurice Fagin.

Upper-class Protestant participation in and encouragement of dialogues on brotherhood and support of minority groups' rights has had interesting social repercussions within Jewish society. In a twenty-year period, as civil rights involvement became a status symbol, the most conservative and respectable elements of the Jewish population, which had been color-blind before, became the seeing-eye dogs of Negro rights. Shedding their indifference and unwillingness to be identified with the black man, they openly and officially embraced his cause. As Will Maslow puts it, "a consensus had been achieved in the Jewish community."

The ten years between 1945 and 1954 were remarkably optimistic times. Negroes and Jews both believed that justice and social acceptance were about to be granted to them. The Jews were right. It was in this decade that they fully entered American life. With the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, they at last became sure enough of their own identity to fight battles on the broad front of civil rights rather than on the local front of anti-Semitism.

And now to the already established Judeo-Christian representation at all official events, public banquets and

luncheons was added the Negro minister, who stood beside the rabbi, priest and minister and thus made complete the visible symbols of the American Creed of equality.

From San Francisco to New York, well-established and respected Jews started to meet and talk regularly with middle-class Negroes about brotherhood. The Negro-Jewish dialogue had begun. "Equality" was fashionable. Because it was, all kinds of Jewish organizations became involved. In order to understand this commitment it is necessary to examine the structure of Jewish community life, its major agencies, their goals and their functions.

Jewish organizational life in America followed a pattern that was paralleled and later imitated by Negroes. It began with religious institutions, moved on to self-help charitable agencies, and finally the creation of organizations devoted to fighting for civil rights, equality and the propagation of a respected image.

The B'nai B'rith, literally "sons of the covenant," was founded in New York City in 1843 by aristocratic Sephardic Jews who had immigrated from England and Holland. It is the oldest and largest Jewish self-help and charitable organization extant and its member agencies include men's lodges, women's chapters and youth groups all over the world.

The need for private educational organizations, hospitals and welfare groups was vital in the middle of the nineteenth century. In 1843 a nationwide free public school system did not exist. There were few public hospitals for the poor and the only form of welfare was the Poor Law inherited from Elizabethan England. Succor under this legislation was provided only in the last extreme and under humiliating conditions, for in the Victorian Age poverty was viewed as a sin as well as a punishment for sins.

A century after the Age of Enlightenment, American Jews finally freed themselves of the stigma of poverty and

refused to allow their more unfortunate members to fall into financial disgrace and become public charges. As an umbrella, the B'nai B'rith lodge was infinitely expandable. In the beginning it sponsored hospitals, synagogues and religious schools. Later it cultivated vocational guidance agencies, finally civil rights groups. Every settlement that could boast of more than ten Jews had its lodge, and the lodge became the American compensation for the lost communal life of Europe.

In 1913 the explosion of anti-Semitism around the case of Leo Frank forced the B'nai B'rith to look beyond the cultivation of Jewish life in America. The result was the creation of the Anti-Defamation League, whose purpose was to protect the image of the Jew.

Of all of the Jewish organizations that can in some sense be considered civil rights agencies, the B'nai B'rith is the most bourgeois in its membership and the most parochial in its concerns. Its member agencies were among the last to join Maslow's "great consensus" and among the first to break away from it under the strain of the Negro-Jewish confrontation in the cities in the sixties.

The two major agencies that have acted as Jewish supporters of equality for the Negro community are the American Jewish Committee and the American Jewish Congress. Often confused by outsiders, the Committee and the Congress become more alike each year in purpose, action and even in membership. They began, however, very differently and until the 1960's they represented separate and frequently antagonistic factions of American Jewry.

The Committee was founded in 1906 to give second- and third-generation German Jews a platform and a political reality. For nearly a quarter of a century it was the official Jewish spokesman. The aristocrat of the Jewish agencies, it had from the beginning a strong moral commitment to the cause of Negro rights as an extension of its role as a protector of Jewish rights. Among the founders were philanthropist Julius Rosenwald and legal crusader

Louis Marshall. A conservative organization, it has always been reluctant to engage in demonstrations or to carry picket signs. It is known rather for its intellectual explorations into the causes of, and possible cures for, prejudice and discrimination. Its monthly magazine, *Commentary,* is a journal of considerable force and influence, and it has frequently examined the most controversial aspects of Negro-Jewish relations.

The Committee, unlike the B'nai B'rith, does not have a mass following. Its membership is drawn from the professional classes and from the old-time large manufacturing and banking families. The younger members tend to live in the wealthy suburbs, and many of the older ones are housed in exclusive apartment houses in the old cities. Not many Committee members have yet been engaged, except theoretically, with the new urban problems brought about by the Negro migration. For they are neither the small Jewish shopkeepers nor the great slumlords of the ghetto, nor do they send their children to the public schools with large Negro enrollments.

Unlike other elite groups who could afford to be liberal and are not, the Committee maintains its allegiance to civil liberties legislation and continues its commitment to the betterment of the Negro; it is, however, appalled by black power slogans and signs of incipient Negro anti-Semitism.

While the Committee may be considered the aristocrat of Jewish agencies, the American Jewish Congress may be called the voice of the middle class. Its members come from that generation of Jews who may have been born in New York's Lower East Side, Boston's Roxbury or Philadelphia's Northern Liberties but who have long since left those neighborhoods behind. Nevertheless, they still retained a strong sense of their Jewish identity. The birth of the Congress in 1922 was one of the fruits of this sentiment. It represents a schism between the early arrivals and the late comers, a defiance of German-Jewish leadership

and the coming of age of the Russian immigrant. The lack of accord between Committee and Congress was not only social and ideological, it was also very personal.

The Jews, like the Negroes, built political movements around the clash between personalities. Just as opposing Negro factions were polarized in the angry dispute between Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. Du Bois, so Jewish politics were fashioned by the feud between Louis Marshall and Rabbi Stephen Wise, who defied the authority of Marshall.

In a strange way the central issues were the same: How should a minority group seek adjustment and justice in American society? and How should it view itself and present itself to the world? Marshall, like Washington, was a conservative. Though, unlike Washington, he was unwilling to accede to the inferior status awarded minority groups, he was, like Washington, very cautious about openly demanding their rights in the political arena. An autocrat by disposition, he would brook no dissent. As Washington had attempted, and failed, to silence Du Bois, so Marshall had tried with the same notable lack of success to quiet the young Stephen Wise.

The Marshall-Wise dispute began over the freedom of Rabbi Wise to speak his own convictions from the pulpit. It ended in the creation of the American Jewish Congress to rival Marshall's Committee. This split affected not only Jewish attitudes about themselves but their attitudes toward Negroes. Although both the Committee's Marshall and the Congress' Wise were signers in 1909 of the original call for a National Committee to Aid Negroes which metamorphosed into the NAACP, they had very different ideas about what Negroes were entitled to in American society and how they should go about claiming their rights.

Oddly, the posture of the individual Jew toward Negroes was often related to his stand on Zionism. The split between American Jews of German descent and those

with an Eastern European background on the issue of Palestine would on the surface seem to have little connection with Jewish-Negro relations. Zionism was the issue around which there formed a whole cluster of political, social and philosophic ideas about how Jews should relate to themselves and to the outside world, what their relationship to other minority groups should be and how far they should go in identifying with them.

Zionism, the age-old dream of the Wandering Jew for a national homeland, goes back to the Biblical days of the Babylonian exile, when Zerubbabel first dreamed of rebuilding the Temple of Jerusalem. In the nineteenth century this religious vision was transformed into a practical political scheme, and in 1918 the British openly declared in favor of Palestine as a Jewish national homeland. It was part of their strategy to defeat the Ottoman Empire, which controlled the country.

Jews in the United States whose major emphasis was on conforming to the American way of life did not care much about Jewish nationalism in the twenties, thirties and forties. Zionism posed a threat to their cultural if not their religious assimilation. Committee Jews, largely of German descent and many generations removed from the bloody persecutions of Europe, were fearful of losing the acceptance they had won in America. Gingerly they approved the issue of Zionism, always wary of being charged with dual loyalty and lack of patriotism; they also approached the problems of social change just as cautiously. Afflicted with a certain kind of American blindness, they failed to see that the suffering of the Negro could not be alleviated merely by fighting against those limited kinds of discrimination that only affected Jews. Many anti-Zionists, usually very conservative, identified emotionally with the white Anglo-Saxon Protestant way of life and were unwilling to commit themselves to bring about the kind of changes necessary to allow Negroes to enter the mainstream of American life.

Jews of Eastern European ancestry, who greatly outnumbered the German Jews, had no such reservations about Zionism. Closer both to the horrors of racism and genocide and to the traditions of religious orthodoxy and the intensely Jewish life of the ghetto, they had much stronger emotional bonds to the dream of a new Jerusalem. The identification with the vision of the Babylonian exiles was very real to those whose parents had wept by the banks of the Dnieper, Dniester and Vistula. The heroic struggles of the Maccabees against Antiochus Epiphanes in 165 B.C. were the folk tales against which they had honed their hopes. They believed completely in Palestine, if not for themselves at least as a place of refuge for their persecuted brethren left behind in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. For American Jews like Will Maslow, the emotional identification with the state of Israel and its socialist and egalitarian ideal was almost as strong as their attachment to America. It was for these Jews that the Congress spoke.

The Congress' concern for the preservation of a Jewish identity was not limited, however, to working for the overseas homeland. It also attempted to create a separate and special place for Jews in America. After twenty-five years of existence, it was confronted with a new problem: the postwar escalated rate of assimilation even among descendants of the Eastern European Jews, and particularly among the young idealistic and intellectual Jews who seemed to be abandoning their identification with Jewish community life. In 1945 Alexander Pekelis, the remarkable Congress director who preceded Maslow, worked out a platform for the new Jew. In a prophetic document entitled "Full Equality in a Free Society" he wrote, "American Jews will find more reasons for taking an affirmative attitude toward being Jews as members of an organized Jewish movement, if they are part and parcel of a great American and human force working for a better world . . . whether or not the individual issues involved touch directly upon so-called

Jewish interests. The tradition and the fate of Israel are indissolubly bound to those of the forces of liberalism."

He warned that "the Jewish Community cannot afford to neglect the problem of Negro anti-Semitism and the great—indeed physical—dangers with which the situations are fraught. Negroes and Negro organizations must learn as soon as possible that in all the causes for which they struggle they can count upon finding the Jews and the American Jewish Congress on the side of justice."

Twenty-five years ago Pekelis said loudly what most Jews are still only whispering: "that some manifestations of anti-Semitism cannot be eliminated by the enactment of or repeal of laws or the endeavors of social psychologists. When the Negro population of Harlem is exploited by a group of Jewish landlords, no group libel statute, no public relations program, and no community interrelations seminar will eradicate anti-Semitism in that area. The Harlem situation yields profits to a microscopic minority of Jews, but it throws a dark shadow upon the vast network of Negro-Jewish relations. Something must be done about this and other strategic key points of racial tensions. This something must be along the lines of a reform of the economic situation in those areas."

To accomplish these tasks, Pekelis proposed that the Congress create a Commission on Law and Social Action. It was as director of this Commission that Maslow came to work for the Congress. Under his guidance the Commission became one of the major instruments in the early civil rights struggle. The collaboration with the NAACP in the late forties and early fifties made possible the legal victory against caste, culminating in the 1954 Supreme Court decision that said separate was not equal. In a very real way this alliance between Jews and Negroes formed the vital center of the American liberal coalition, became the dominating influence in the Democratic party, and its ideals often became official government policy.

Alone, the Negroes could not have created the social

and political climate that made possible the great school desegregation decision in 1954. And yet with this decision the formal role of the Jewish agencies declined, as did their importance in the civil rights cause. The civil rights movement passed into the hands of those who boycotted and joined the sit-ins—the Freedom Riders and the New Left. It passed from the battle against segregation to the battle for integration; and this called for a more radical temperament than the ADL, the Committee or the Congress possessed. Yet Jews, out of all proportion to their numbers in the population, participated in this struggle too. Their commitment, however, sprang from another source: the prophetic and outsider tradition of Jewish history.

7

FOOT SOLDIERS IN THE BLACK HAGANNAH

DESPITE the jubilation of Negroes and white liberals alike, the school desegregation decision handed down by the Supreme Court on May 17, 1954, in the case of *Brown vs. the Board of Education* signaled not the end of the struggle for racial equality but the beginning of the terrible battle for integration. It was this conflict that was to engage the minds and the hearts of the best American youth.

Not surprisingly, the first movement toward real integration took place in the Deep South. It began on a cold day in December 1955, when seamstress Rosa Parks, tired from a long day's work, boarded a homebound bus in Montgomery, Alabama. After paying her fare, Mrs. Parks sat down in the last empty seat in the front of the bus. Several stops later a white man entered. When Rosa Parks refused to yield her place to him she was jailed.

On hearing of her arrest, the Negro clergy of Mont-

gomery decided to boycott the city's buses until, as the then unknown Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., put it, "Jim Crow was put off." King printed and distributed leaflets alerting the Negroes to the boycott. The effect was electrifying: Negroes walked or arranged car pools; the transportation company's revenue fell and the spotlight of national attention was focused on the strike. Money from white liberals, and particularly from individual Jews and Jewish organizations, flowed into the boycott fund. Martin Luther King became a household name. He was the first educated middle-class Negro seeking full racial equality to gain a mass following.

Montgomery desegregated its buses and the nation was gratified. The boycott, however, remained an isolated incident—a small wave—and it took two years to create a second ripple. Again it was ordinary Negroes who gained heroic stature when they obeyed the law and defied custom by leading their children into the previously all-white Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, in September 1957. Federal troops were eventually dispatched to preserve order while nine Negro children went to school.

Meanwhile in Virginia, "massive resistance" to integration was decreed by the late Senator Harry Byrd's long entrenched political machine. This resulted in public schools in Warren County, Charlottesville, Norfolk and Prince Edward County being shut down. In order to ease tensions and to prepare for the opening of integrated schools, the Virginia regional office of the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith sent several human relations films to an NAACP workshop. Jack Kilpatrick, editor of the Richmond *News Leader* and now a nationally syndicated pro-segregationist columnist, claimed that Jews courted contempt when they engaged in integrationist activities. The result was a flood of vitriolic anti-Semitic criticism throughout the South.

Writing in 1958 about the situation of the Jews in Virginia, Murray Friedman, then executive director of the

beleaguered Virginia B'nai B'rith chapter before he moved north to the Philadelphia office of the American Jewish Committee, said that "the federal school desegregation decisions had the effect of making the ordinary Southern Jew more keenly aware of his Jewishness." Although Jews did not become members of white citizens' councils, their attitude toward integration hardened appreciably. They, unlike their white gentile neighbors, did not believe their children would be defiled by going to school with Negroes. Instead they feared that the tension caused by the civil rights movement would result in anti-Semitism.

The fear was not unfounded. When Rabbi Emmet A. Frank of Alexandria criticized Virginia's massive resistance laws, he was answered with bomb threats. One local newspaper, singling him out for attack, said in an editorial, "Rabbi Frank's slanderous statements and innuendoes will cause irreparable damage to the hitherto friendly relations between Jews and Christians."

In Atlanta, where Leo Frank had been condemned forty-five years earlier, a synagogue was destroyed. Hate literature inundated Norfolk and Newport News; it called for "white Americans to take action if this Jew-inspired program for compulsory mongrelization is to be defeated." It labeled the conservative American Jewish Committee as "leading an integrationist conspiracy."

As the drive for integration moved north, it was accompanied by a wave of vandalism. Chalked swastikas defaced Jewish tombstones and crooked crosses marred synagogue doors and windows. Although the Jewish establishment continued to stand firm against legal segregation, it could not garner the support of the majority of Jews to move toward integration.

By 1960 it was clear that if progress toward integration was to be made it would have to be initiated by groups outside the old liberal voting coalition of Jews, Negroes, labor unions and big-city Democratic bosses. It was the students who supplied the new force.

On Sunday night January 31, 1960, four freshmen from the all-Negro North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College in Greensboro were engaged in a favorite collegiate pastime—the bull session. Izell Blair, Jr., the campus chairman of the Committee for Justice, commenting on the conversation, said, "It just didn't seem right that we would have to walk two miles to town, buy notebook paper and toothpaste in a national chain store and then not be able to get a bite to eat and a cup of coffee at the counter."

Blair and his friends decided to act. The following afternoon, Monday, February 1, at about 4:45 P.M., they entered the F. W. Woolworth store on North Elm Street in the heart of Greensboro. Each bought a tube of toothpaste and then sat down at the lunch counter. They were refused service. Nonetheless, they remained on their stools until the store closed.

On Tuesday, February 2, the four were joined by sixteen of their fellow A and T students. Again, all were denied service. Wednesday saw fifty demonstrators sitting in, among them were Negro high school students and white coeds from the Women's College in Greensboro. The next week there were spontaneous demonstrations in Durham, Raleigh, Charlotte, Winston-Salem, High Point, Salisbury and Concord, North Carolina. Within six weeks, sixty-five communities in twelve states had witnessed protest.

From the third day of the sit-ins in Greensboro, the demonstrations were interracial. On Lincoln's birthday about fifty Hunter College students joined a sympathy picket line of one thousand outside of the 125th Street Harlem branch of Woolworth's. Students at Rutgers, Berkeley, Minnesota, Yale and Antioch rushed to sit-in on behalf of equality. David Koulack of Brandeis went south and returned to organize a support movement on his own campus. In 130 Northern cities and towns, students—mainly white, and many Jewish—demonstrated solidarity with their Southern brethren.

Negroes and whites alike were condemning more than

caste; they were also attacking the life style of their parents. For the first time the sons and daughters of that most conservative class—the black bourgeois—felt secure enough and far enough removed from the abyss of Negro poverty and powerlessness to protest. "The sit-in movement," Martin Luther King said at a mass rally in a Raleigh, North Carolina, church in April 1960, "is a revolt against those Negroes who have indulged themselves in big cars and ranch-style houses, rather than joining in the Movement for Freedom." For the Jews it was similarly a condemnation of "Miami Beach values."

After the sit-ins came the Freedom Rides, which were the result of the inspiration of James Farmer, then national director of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). The South retaliated by putting up a roadblock of violence: the first bus was stopped and burned near Anniston, Alabama. Hundreds of Freedom Riders were beaten or jailed as they tried to enter "White Only" sections of terminals along the route. Ultimately, federal troops were sent in and the Interstate Commerce Commission ruled that segregated facilities along interstate bus and rail routes were illegal.

Among the whites manhandled during the Freedom Rides were a large number of Jews, and their participation was commented on by the satirist Allen Sherman in a parody sung to the tune of "Frère Jacques." "And how's your sister Ida?" the song asks, and answers, "She's a Freedom Rida."

In 1961 the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), founded by Negroes but then still open to whites, formed a loose alliance with Martin Luther King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), an organization composed mainly of clerics, to work on voter registration in the black belt counties of the old Confederacy.

Between 1961 and the March on Washington in August

1963, SNCC along with CORE and SCLC kept up a steady drumfire against the customs of Southern segregation. In Albany, Georgia, 2,800 Negroes, 5 percent of the population, went to jail because they insisted on their right to register to vote. In 1962 James Meredith was admitted to the University of Mississippi with the aid of the United States Army. In 1963, one thousand cities in the United States, North as well as South, witnessed demonstrations.

Supporting the demonstrators were students of both races. They brought with them a rising expectation that justice could be achieved and a rising anger that it had not been granted. Bolstering the Negroes further was world-wide decolonization: in less than twenty years after the end of World War II, thirty-one independent black African nations had been formed. The pride black Americans took in these events was not unlike the confidence American Jews felt from seeing the state of Israel emerge in 1948.

In 1962 and 1963 the young civil rights workers moved off their counter stools and out of the white washrooms in the bus terminals into the rural communities of the South. There they were beaten, shot, gassed, whipped and jailed for their attempts to encourage blacks to register, vote and take advantage of their Constitutional rights. Confederate brutality and federal indifference hardened them into a non-violent guerrilla army: the enemy became not segregation but the "system." These young soldiers stopped bearing witness and began organizing the black community. They became increasingly bitter, though they still believed that if the nation were sufficiently shamed it could be forced into redeeming its pledge of equality to the black man. They learned that the mills and factories of Danville and Birmingham were frequently owned by Northern corporations, and that on the boards of the companies were many who publicly espoused the cause of equality but who privately refused to act when civil rights impinged on their pocketbooks.

The wave of demonstrations reached its high point in Birmingham in 1963. The rigid segregation of Alabama's largest city was a product of its origins in the period of Reconstruction. Deliberately planned and built in 1871 to house the steel and mining industries that had sprung up in the late nineteenth century, its customs mirrored all the pain, fear and frustrated rage of the poor white mill hands who had been driven off their land by war and agricultural depression.

Birmingham was not an easy fortress to attack. Between 1957 and 1963 seventeen Negro homes and churches had been bombed and not a single arrest had been made. The police department was run by the notorious Bull Connor, while the city's white business leaders sat smug and content. Against this enemy, Martin Luther King planned a non-violent blitzkrieg: store boycotts, restaurant sit-ins, marches on city hall and church kneel-ins.

Birmingham responded by playing high-pressure fire hoses on praying Negroes, setting police dogs on peaceful marchers, and when force failed, obtaining a federal injunction against demonstrations. It was at this point that King made his first break with the strategy of legal redress that had been pursued for fifty years by the NAACP, the Urban League and the coalition of Jewish and labor groups. For the first time a civil rights leader defied a court order. The result was mass arrests and criticism from previously friendly quarters.

From his Birmingham jail cell, King wrote to his fellow clergymen—white, Negro, Protestant, Catholic and Jewish—to explain why he had flouted the law. "There is nothing new about this kind of civil disobedience. It was evidenced sublimely in the refusal of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in their refusal to obey the laws of Nebuchadnezzar on the ground that a higher moral law was at stake . . . We should never forget that everything Adolf Hitler did in Germany was legal . . . It was illegal to aid

a Jew in Hitler's Germany. Even so, I am sure, that had I lived in Germany at the time, I would have aided and comforted my Jewish brothers."

In the face of the excesses of the Birmingham authorities, the stoical behavior of the Negroes caught the conscience of the nation. And A. Philip Randolph's twenty-year-old vision of a March on Washington was revived. This time a young President, John F. Kennedy, welcomed it. The visible assemblage of nearly two hundred thousand blacks and whites singing "We Shall Overcome" at the foot of the Lincoln Memorial was designed to prod a reluctant Congress into passing a comprehensive civil rights bill. In the crowd on that clear warm August day of 1963, just one hundred years after the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation, were representatives of every major Jewish agency, every Negro agency, of church councils and federations, of the liberal labor unions and the intellectuals, of the Americans for Democratic Action, of CORE, SNCC and the American Civil Liberties Union, as well as massive numbers of unaffiliated citizens.

Ten months later, on June 20, 1964, after the traumatic assassination of President Kennedy, Congress passed the bill. The work of the white liberals and the Jewish agencies seemed at an end.

Little more than twenty-four hours later, between 10:30 P.M. and midnight on June 21, three young civil rights workers were murdered on a backwoods road in Neshoba County, Mississippi: Michael Henry Schwerner, twenty-four years old, of Pelham, New York; Andrew Goodman, twenty years old, of Westchester County, New York; and James Earl Chaney, twenty-one years old, of Meridian, Mississippi. The heavy-set, bearded Schwerner and the thin, dark-eyed Goodman were at least nominal Jews. Chaney, who was short and slight, was a Negro. "They hoped," as a friend of Michael Schwerner's said, "to find fulfillment by helping Negroes improve their places in

that portion of our society which still feels compelled to boast of white supremacy."

To Schwerner, who was shot through the heart by one of a posse of white Southerners which included a racist sheriff, the civil rights movement was "the essential domestic conflict of our time," and he wanted to be identified with it. In 1963 he had joined CORE and had gone to work with poor Negro boys in a rotting settlement house in the Two Bridges section of lower Manhattan. He was jailed twice in that year: once, on July 4th, with his wife, Rita, for demonstrating at Gwynn Oaks, Maryland; and later that month, for joining a picket line on a Manhattan building project to protest the exclusion of Negroes from construction trade unions.

When the 1963 March on Washington was being organized, he persuaded his father, a successful wig manufacturer, to contribute enough money to hire buses to make the trip to the Capital. Schwerner, along with ninety Negro boys, hailed Martin Luther King's dream of a new America on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, but for Schwerner the dream had been shattered by Birmingham even before its articulation. Bull Connor, police dogs, electric prods, fire hoses aimed at praying demonstrators, and the murder of NAACP leader Medgar Evers had made clear the unreality of the 1954 Supreme Court decision. He decided to go south: nothing short of a total commitment to the "movement" would satisfy him.

Early in January 1964, he arrived in Meridian, Mississippi, with his wife, Rita. Their first objective was the creation of a community center, an assignment they had been given by the Council of Federated Organizations, headed by two brilliant young Negroes, Robert Moses and David Dennis. COFO, as the Council was called, was an alliance between CORE, SNCC and Martin Luther King's SCLC; it believed that if it could crack Mississippi, it could crack the South.

Just how far Jews like Schwerner were from the liberal-establishment-Jews who had supported court and legislative action against segregation was illustrated by the confrontation between Schwerner and a Meridian, Mississippi, rabbi.

The rabbi, concerned with the effect that Schwerner's presence was having on Meridian, urged him to leave. The rabbi's main fear was that white anger at Schwerner might be turned against local Jews. He argued that Schwerner was already labeled "that goddamned bearded atheist communist Jew," and that consequently he was not helping Negroes but hurting Jews. With a flourish the rabbi added, "Progress will come with time and from within; it will not be made by outside agitation."

It was to the rabbi and those like him that Aaron Henry, the president of the Clarksdale, Mississippi, NAACP and founder of the Mississippi Freedom Democrats, referred when he later said, "In the fight for human dignity, we have never underestimated our opposition, but we have overestimated our support. We thought that naturally we would have the Jews on our side, because the enemies of the Jews were usually found in the same group that oppose us. But we don't have the Jews supporting us." To Aaron Henry, the Negro proprietor of a chain of small drugstores, Michael Schwerner wasn't a Jew. He was, as Schwerner often said of himself, only a man.

Unheedful of the rabbi's advice, Schwerner remained in Mississippi. Late in the summer of 1964 he turned his attention away from community organizing and toward a massive voter-registration drive in Meridian. Schwerner's efforts were part of a statewide action known as the Mississippi Summer Project. The purpose of this project, which was being put into effect with the help of hundreds of black and white college students from all over the United States, was to gain a measure of political power with the state's 900,000 Negroes through the creation of

a second political party—the Freedom Democratic party.

It was his work in this project that led directly to Schwerner's murder and that of his two passengers. These murders, along with refusal of the national convention of the Democratic party two months later to fully recognize the Freedom Democratic party, were major catalysts in the radicalization of a generation of college students.

Among those so affected was Eric Weinberger—a short wiry veteran of four years in the South as an organizer of cooperatives among Negro tenant farmers and sharecroppers, a leader of street demonstrations in Brownsville, Tennessee, a victim of Mississippi jails and now a leader of the Vietnam War resistance. Weinberger, unlike Schwerner and Goodman, is still alive to tell of the reasons he abandoned the secure suburban life of Great Neck, Long Island. "I felt compelled," he said, "to answer the big question that each of us must face—human freedom. I do not believe that we have real freedom in this country and I do not believe that we can have democracy in America until we change our society. The mass of people in the United States do not have any voice in making the decisions that most vitally affect their lives." Weinberger, a nominal Jew though affiliated with the Christian-oriented, Gandhi-influenced Committee for Non-Violent Action, cited some examples: "Back in the late fifties and early sixties none of us were asked how we felt about testing atomic weapons in the atmosphere even though the tests resulted in radioactive pollution of the air we breathed and the food we ate. The denial of suffrage to Negroes in the South is another symptom of this basic disorder," a sickness that Weinberger categorizes as a "basic misshaping of American institutions. My work in the civil rights movement," he continued, "grew out of my desire to change the value system of our country and the way Americans live. In the late fifties, I started with the peace movement. The most important thing then was to end the bomb

tests. In the early sixties the work to be done was with poor Southern Negroes. Now we must end the war in Vietnam. I want to spend my life struggling toward a new human understanding."

Schwerner and Goodman would probably have agreed. These three middle-class suburban Jews, who believed not in God but in the infinite perfectability of man, were typical members of the New Left. It was the New Left that took up the battle for integration after the trade unions and the liberal establishment abandoned it like an unwanted child on the steps of the courthouse.

Politically the New Left is a radical protest against the obvious inequities of American life. To combat racial segregation, atomic testing and the bombing of far-off Asian villages, its adherents took to the streets.

Morally the New Left is a revulsion against a society that is becoming increasingly corrupt. "On its deepest level," Jack Newfield, the movement's historian and an editor of the *Village Voice* said, "it is an existential revolt against remote and impersonal machines that are not responsive to human need. The New Radicals feel sharply the growing totalitarianization of life. They feel powerless and unreal."

A substantial number of these new protesters come, like Weinberger, Schwerner and Goodman, from Jewish homes. Although they claim that Judaism played no conscious part in molding their commitment, it is not idle to wonder why so many Jews were motivated to protest the values of a country where they have now found almost complete acceptance.

Members of the Jewish liberal establishment, who are sympathetic to the ends desired if not the means employed by the dissenting young intellectuals, refute this denial of a Jewish heritage. Murray Friedman, the regional director of the Pennsylvania office of the American Jewish Committee, believes that "the Jewish kids who went south

were acting out, albeit unconsciously, a Jewish tradition. It is as if these boys were wearing their yarmulkes without knowing it."

Eric Weinberger regards this hypothesis with a great deal of skepticism although he concedes, when pressed, "I guess you can say there is a Jewish motivation insofar as Jews believe in a world in which people behave decently."

The difficulty with Friedman's theory is that it really doesn't fit the facts. After the ill-fated stand of the Zealots in A.D. 73 at Masada there are few incidents that reveal Jews as Freedom Fighters. A despised and segregated minority in Europe where social movements were, until the end of the eighteenth century, frequently bound up with Christian doctrinal disputes, Jews had little opportunity to play such a role. It is true they were learned, literate and cultivated during the centuries when the life of the bulk of Europeans was marked by brutality and ignorance. Their familial relations were humane and the communal life in the Jewish ghettos was governed by law. But not until the nineteenth century did Jews become active, and then only in very small numbers, in the great movements of liberation. They were the beneficiaries rather than initiators of the English, French and American revolutions.

Negro author James Baldwin was quick to pick up the historical flaw in the common Jewish argument that Jews, because they had been victims, could not be persecutors. It was, Baldwin insisted, Jewish history that explained Jews such as the rabbi of Meridian and the ghetto shopkeeper. Baldwin did not castigate Jews like Weinberger, Schwerner and Goodman but the Jews who through the centuries have acted as agents of royal and church power, as peddlers to the poor and as middlemen standing between the peasantry and the monarchy. "This Jew's major distinction," wrote Baldwin, "is given him by that history of Christendom which has so successfully victimized both

Negroes and Jews. And he [the Jew] is playing the role assigned him by Christians long ago: he is doing the dirty work."

If the overrepresentation of Jews in the New Left is not the result of a Jewish heritage of social protest, it is the result of another Jewish tradition—scholarship. The New Left is a movement of intellectuals, and Jews historically have formed a substantial part of the intellectual community. Throughout their history Jews have awarded prestige to the scholar; in Europe this intellectuality spawned such iconoclasts as Spinoza, Marx, Freud and Einstein. In the United States this love of learning has been translated into a drive for education, which more than any single factor propelled the majority of Jews out of the working class and into the middle and upper classes within one generation. Today, while only one out of every five Americans goes to college, four out of every five Jews attend institutions of higher learning. It was on the campuses of the colleges, universities and "multi-versities" that the New Left, with its attachment to pacifism and civil rights, was born.

Intellectual Jews, like other intellectuals, found in these twin causes a way to protest against a society they had never made. These Jews attacked the materialism of the Jewish middle class but identified it not so much as specifically Jewish but as a product of the American way of life.

Alfred Kazin, the literary and social critic, as far back as February 1944 asked, "What was this Jewish heritage?" And answered, "Whatever it may have been in the past, today in America it has deteriorated into nothingness, or worse than nothingness. It has taken on all the worst qualities of that culture while retaining nothing valuable of its own." In short, for Kazin, and presumably for Weinberger, Schwerner and Goodman, all that remained of two thousand years of agonized history was a taste for lox.

Schwerner, Goodman and Weinberger were all products of liberal affluence. Raised in sterile suburbs and products of impersonal universities, they were in the words of Jack Newfield, "the children of economic surplus and spiritual starvation who sought to give meaning to their lives by identifying them with a cause greater than their own personal needs."

No longer able to believe in the ability of the federal government to right all wrongs, the New Left became increasingly militant. It was a militancy that coincided with the first lawless outbreak of Negroes in the black ghettos of the North. Selma in the spring of 1965 was only an epilogue to the previous era of good faith. It was the final joint appearance of the middle-class Negro, white and Jewish coalition. Selma was the last event for which it was possible for Jewish organizations to charter planes for their members so that they might join Negroes on the last mile of a demonstration march.

In 1965 and 1966 the slogans of "Black Power," "Race Pride," "Black Dignity" and "The Third World" replaced "Freedom Now" and "We Shall Overcome" on the lips of young Negro students and activists. Deliberately, even bitterly, the black avant-garde leadership detached itself from its former white allies. It disparaged liberal establishment sympathies and cooperative Jewish agencies.

Dividing the young black radicals from the integrated bourgeois coalition were their disparate views of the movement. To the old liberal alliance, civil rights was a part-time reformist affair. To the young rebels it was a full-time total commitment to the creation of a new society.

By 1967 the civil rights movement was fragmented. The escalation of the Vietnam War drew away much student vigor, and Martin Luther King, realizing that the war and racism were linked, accompanied the students into the peace movement and sought to weld the black man's cause to the cause of peace.

The young radicals who put Negro rights above peace became increasingly inclined toward black nationalism. Alienated by this new militancy, the middle-class Negro and Jewish agencies made studies of the massive evils that afflicted the poor Negroes in the Northern ghettos and repeated the tired phrases of brotherhood. But while they did this, the sympathy of the mass of Jews shifted away from the Negroes.

Of the once vital Negro-Jewish alliance, all that was left by 1968 was a largely verbal commitment. The civil rights movement, which had dominated the national scene between 1954 and 1964, had again become a minority politics.

8

THUNDER ON THE LEFT

On May 6, 1967, long-time socialist and pacifist Bayard Rustin accused Stokely Carmichael, the then twenty-five-year-old Black Panther of SNCC, and Floyd McKissick, the separationist advocate, of attempting to murder the civil rights movement. The occasion for the accusation was a conclave of a hundred old-guard intellectuals in New York's Woodstock Hotel.

Leading a group that included such prominent "social Democrats" as Michael Harrington, whose book *The Other America* exposed the tragedy of American poverty, and Irving Howe, a Brandeis University professor and the editor of *Dissent,* Bayard Rustin disparaged the New Left's growing fascination with violence. Wearily he recalled how he had to damp down the revolutionary enthusiasm of a group of Howard University students, and explain to them that "the conditions for successful guerrilla warfare hardly exist in the United States."

Rustin was not only indignant at the students' wholesale condemnation of reformist politics and the generation of leadership which he represents, but he was wounded, though he didn't like to admit it, by the charge that he was a "defender of a fundamentally flawed system." For Rustin, the problem of the Negro can only be solved by ending poverty.

"A society with adequate housing, education and employment doesn't need to resort to race," he said emphatically. A maverick, he has for most of his life worked for Puerto Rican laborers, demonstrated for Indian freedom back in the days when the subcontinent was a British colony, fought for the rights of Japanese Americans interned in California during World War II, done time as a conscientious objector, and protested atomic bomb tests. He proposed "to wipe out American poverty in a single decade" with a "freedom budget" estimated at $185 billion. Taking up an idea conceived by A. Philip Randolph, Rustin believes that by judicious investment the federal government can provide full employment, a guaranteed annual income, the virtual elimination of urban slums, full educational opportunities, universal medical care, purification of air and water and modernization of the nation's transit system. "We must," he argued, "do this not for the Negroes or for Whites but for all of the poor. We must give not take, love not hate."

In a time when American society is becoming increasingly polarized into rich and poor, hawk and dove, reactionary and radical, Rustin's hand might well have been one of the last black hands proffered in friendship to the white world. With new black leadership pushing up from the ghetto communities, he is one of the few remaining Negro leaders who places special value on Jewish support of the Negro cause.

"Jews are," he said, "an absolutely essential part of the coalition that is needed to obtain equality for Negroes.

They have played an historic role in this coalition. In fact, they were the first group to join the Negroes."

If the Negro-Jewish alliance is to survive even in an attenuated form, it will be forced to depend upon the old, not the new, left. Perforce, it will rely upon the leaders of a fading generation of radicals like Bayard Rustin on the Negro side and Saul Alinsky, the community organizer and an early exponent of the concept of community control, on the Jewish side. The days of legislation are over; the platitudes of brotherhood have turned dry and stale. The pickets are black and the voice of separation is growing louder and louder. Only the Bayard Rustins and the Saul Alinskys—the outsiders with a vision of America still willing to respond democratically to the pressures of its constituent groups—can maintain the weakened bridge between these communities.

Springing to the defense of the crumbling Negro-Jewish alliance, Rustin, at a series of meetings and conferences in the late spring of 1967, attacked Stokely Carmichael for turning on the Jews. Deriding the chain of logic that led Carmichael to gnaw at the coalition, he said, "If I have been beaten fifteen times, if I have been jailed twenty-eight times, if my buddies have been murdered in Mississippi, if I have paid fines of over eight thousand dollars, if I have bail on me for over ten thousand dollars and have made all these sacrifices, but the situation in housing, schools and jobs gets worse and worse, then there is something wrong with our tactics. So what do I do? I turn against just those people who have helped me the most and in the order upon which I have depended upon them and which I had faith in them—Dr. King, Phil Randolph, Roy Wilkins, Whitney Young, the Jews, the Unions and the white liberals. Carmichael has attacked the Jews precisely because he had faith that the Jews, who had known persecution, would continue to stand with the Negro as they had from the beginning."

Rustin, however, is not a believer in the power of nega-

tive thinking, and has more reason than most of today's Negroes to have faith in coalition politics. A Northerner—he was born and raised in West Chester, Pennsylvania, educated in Wilberforce College, Chaney State Teachers College, and City College of New York—he has lived his life in integrated company. In the 1920's he rallied support for the Scottsboro boys—nine poor Negroes who were unjustly accused of raping two white prostitutes. In 1942 he was one of the founders of CORE, then an avowedly biracial organization. He helped to organize both the 1943 march on Washington, which did not take place, and the 1963 march, which did. A premature Freedom Rider, in 1946 he served ninety days on a North Carolina prison farm for defying segregation laws. His subsequent journalistic exposé put an end to chain gangs in North Carolina. In 1955 he helped Martin Luther King organize the Montgomery bus boycott, and he was an avid fund raiser for the early sixties' Freedom Rides and other tests of the Southern caste system. He has been arrested twenty-four times in the cause of civil rights. So it is with almost heartbreaking anguish that he has witnessed the movement slip, not only from his leadership but away from its goal of an integrated society. Commenting to his old associates in CORE on the new generation of black-separatist leaders, he said, "You cannot talk about civil rights without talking about integration. There is no such thing as equality without integration."

At an early age Rustin was taught by his Quaker grandmother to despise violence and all naked expressions of hate. To this day he is openly contemptuous of Negro tough talk, for to him the cost of such emotional release is too high: "It scares off allies. Negroes represent only a minority—ten percent of the population. Without allies we will be helpless." Almost instinctively he reacted against the new versions of retreat sounded by McKissick and Carmichael: to Rustin, Carmichael's "going it alone" and McKissick's improvisation on the theme of "black

power" were variations on the old Booker T. Washington tune, "Drop your buckets where you are."

Bayard Rustin has long been a strong supporter of African independence, but he never succumbed to the blandishments of the black life, as did the aged Du Bois, who as a young man was a leading integrationist. In the American setting Rustin can see no place for a separate black community. He still has ties to the black servant class—his sister is a maid to a Jewish psychiatrist in Chester County, Pennsylvania—and he claims to understand better than either McKissick or Carmichael that there are many opportunities open to Negroes.

In turn, Carmichael and McKissick have frequently labeled Rustin's views as Uncle Tomish. Rustin, in turn, has refused to admit there is any connection between the Negro's cultivation of race pride and his ability to demand equality. He scorns Negroes who are "interested in navel-watching discussions of image." Fiercely defending the shrinking ground of the old liberal alliance he accused Martin Luther King in 1967 of "not having any clear idea what the problem is or how to solve it." Criticizing King's belief that white Americans owe black Americans a moral debt, Rustin said in the last spring of King's life, "a social movement cannot be based on past sins." Leery of the increasing blackness of Northern protests and their large and undefined goals, he has pointed out that "A demonstration should have an immediate achievable target. Protesting against being a black man in America is just a gimmick."

Continuing to make a point he feels strongly, and one which is reminiscent of the earlier SNCC and CORE philosophy, which extolled the innate and superior virtues of the poor, regardless of race, he said, "We must gear demonstrations so that more and more of the poor whites feel comfortable in them."

A pacifist, Rustin claims that King, Carmichael and McKissick's efforts to keep their student following by

marrying civil rights to a protest against the war in Vietnam was a strategic error. Ignoring the bond of hostility shared by many Jews and civil rights leaders to the war, Rustin said, "The movement can gain nothing without President Johnson's support." The President's commitment in 1967, he warned, "might be diluted if rights leaders continued to take strong stands against Administration policy." Extremely critical of the Asian conflict—"It is wrong," he repeated patiently to a *New York Times* reporter, "to take another human life"—he calculated that for Negroes there was no profit in debating whether the purpose of the Administration was to exterminate Negroes in Vietnam. "Civil rights leaders," he argued, "should instead be discussing jobs for Negroes."

For all his tendency toward Christian moralizing, Bayard Rustin realized that the army is not unpopular with Negroes. He knows that to an increasing number of black men it seems to offer the only way up and out of the ghetto.

In May 1967 he recalled with a smile "the early days of our struggle." Referring to the period immediately after the 1954 Supreme Court school desegregation decision he said, "There was great travail then, but we were involved in the simplest kind of thing—desegregation by social action. It was possible without the federal government's spending a single penny to destroy old institutions and build new ones simultaneously in the South. Now we are faced with totally different problems. Ever since 1954 the great mass of Negroes in the North have found that not all the legislation passed was helpful to them. They discovered that as the laws piled up so did their problems. Since 1954 Negro unemployment has doubled. The ghettos have grown larger. They are infested with rats, more roaches and greater despair."

Despite the fact that he directed the New York school boycott of February 3, 1964, the largest civil rights demonstration up to that time, Rustin believes that the tech-

niques of the sit-in, the ride-in, the wade-in and the pray-in, all designed to combat caste in the South, have proved ineffective weapons against poverty in the North. Ironically, the Negro masses in the South found the way to solve the terrible dilemma of Confederate racism when they emigrated from the farms to the cities, from the South to the North, but progress seemed to stop at the Northern cities.

In Neshoba County, Mississippi, just outside of Laurelton (where Michael Schwerner began the voter registration drive that ended in his death), most Negroes are either under twenty-one or over sixty-five. The others have gone north to Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, to Cincinnati, Dayton and Indianapolis. If they return at all it is only to die.

Between 1940 and 1950 the Negro population of New York increased from 290,000 to 340,000; in 1960, 24 percent of the residents of Chicago were Negro; in Cleveland and Detroit the population is 29 percent black. Although the flood began to subside in the late sixties, the fact is that the great cities of the North are becoming increasingly black. In 1970 the population of Philadelphia was over 35 percent black. Demographers predict that by 1985 Philadelphia, Detroit, Chicago, Cleveland and St. Louis would join Washington, D. C., and Newark as cities with black majorities.

In the 1920's these cities underwent a similar trauma when the immigrant Catholics and Jews overwhelmed the WASPs. Today the Jews and Catholics are part of the "native stock" that is being inundated by the Negro newcomers. And they don't like it any better than the people they superseded. Rustin recognized this fact even if Carmichael and McKissick did not. He also understood the similarity between the new Negro immigrants and the Europeans who preceded them. Concentrated, as were the Irish, the Italians, the Poles, the Ukrainians and the Jews in their own slums, they are poorer than the native born. They are also less educated with a higher rate of unemploy-

ment, crime, disease and illegitimacy. A profile of the poor Negro today could easily be confused with the portrait drawn of the immigrant Irish or Slovak by the "progressive" Professor Edward A. Ross in 1913. The difference lies not so much in the immigrant but in the society into which he has moved.

"The self-made man in America is a myth," Rustin said in a speech sponsored by the Jewish Labor Committee in the spring of 1967. "It is no longer possible to pull yourself up by your bootstraps. The descendants of the European immigrants were aided in their fight for justice by a series of steps which no longer exist for the poor white or the poor Negro. In that earlier American culture there was an abundance of free land and a need for uneducated muscle power. However, today in a society committed to 4 percent unemployment and increased automation, such muscle power is no longer marketable.

"Even the Jews," he complained, "have the fantasy about pulling yourself up by your bootstraps. Somebody is always telling me how his grandfather had a little shop, and he sold candy and cigars, and the kids lived with the mother in the back. Then a few years later he moved upstairs so they could expand the business. The thing winds up with the family owning Macy's.

"But today the failure rate of small business is astronomical. Family retail stores are being squeezed out by big chains. The corner grocer cannot compete in quality, quantity or prices with the A & P, so he ends up exploiting the people in his own neighborhood."

Examining the Jews, the immigrant group that perplexes many Negro leaders because they cannot rid themselves of the vision of what these European pariahs have made of themselves in America, he tried to see the reality behind the image.

"Negroes," he said, "nurture a persisting myth that the Jews of America attained social mobility and status solely because they had money. It is unwise to ignore this error

for many reasons. In a negative sense it encourages anti-Semitism and overestimates money as a value. In a positive sense the full truth reveals a useful lesson. Jews progressed because they possessed a tradition of education combined with social and political action . . . Millions of Jews for half a century remained relatively poor, but they were far from passive . . . very few Jews sank into despair and escapism . . . Their life raft was social action.

"The Eastern European Jew," Rustin pointed out, "who entered the United States in 1900 was not half so prepared to make it in this society as the average uneducated illiterate Negro out of Mississippi. The Negro, after all, knows something of American culture, and the language of the land is his own. The difference is that the minute the Eastern European Jew got off Ellis Island, this society was ready to buy his muscle power. No Head Start was needed for him, no special training, no talk of upgrading." Rustin also noted that "in the days when Jews were immigrants, the trade union movement was growing. It acted as an umbrella against extreme capitalism and government, protecting the rights of the workers and uplifting them economically. Today the trade union movement is not growing at a comparable rate and it cannot afford to organize many of the people who need most to be organized. In the old days it was not merely that Jews were intelligent and had a family. Many got from the Lower East Side to West End Avenue precisely because the Hatters were being formed, and the Amalgamated, and the ILGWU; and the unions offered these immigrants tremendous protection and possibility of growth."

Rustin sought to find an answer to the Negro problem by combining the traditional Jewish involvement in the labor movement with the even older Negro reliance upon governmental assistance. The hybrid offspring of this odd match is the "Freedom Budget." Of the 184 original endorsers of the Budget, one-third are Jews. They include such prestigious names as Morris Abram and John Slawson

of the American Jewish Committee, Will Maslow and Rabbi Arthur J. Lelyveld of the Congress, representatives of the National Council of Jewish Women, labor leader David Dubinsky and the writer Nat Hentoff.

Despite the support of equalitarian Catholics and political celebrities such as John Kenneth Galbraith, the whole enterprise has a too-late quality, which was re-enforced by the appearance of the late Norman Thomas and Jerry Voorhis. Of the new Negroes, only Martin Luther King and John Lewis lent their names.

While Rustin and those allied with him still dream of a federal expenditure of $185 billion to eliminate poverty, Congress eliminates rent supplements and President Nixon pares down job training programs, casts a stingy eye on school subsidies and emasculates the Office of Education and the Office of Economic Opportunity. In the bifurcation of the American political spectrum, Rustin and his allies are either too far to the right of the black militants or too far to the left of the middle-class liberals. In fact, the liberal Jews, the equalitarian unionists, the conscience-stricken Catholics and the committed Protestants are no longer united, nor in command of the center.

Moving into the vacuum in the ghetto in the late 1960's was a new kind of community organization built around color. Its inspirer was a white man and a Jew—Saul Alinsky. Neither a German-uplifter in the style of Rosenwald or Marshall, a Russian caste fighter like Maslow, nor an integrationist in the spirit of Michael Schwerner, Alinsky held a unique position. Like Rustin, his exact contemporary, he was a revolutionary who knew he was trapped in a reformist society.

Paradoxically, his commitment also was not to Negro betterment but to justice. "I have never aspired to be a civil rights leader. I'd have been just as happy organizing poor whites as poor Negroes." In fact, that is how Alinsky, the theorist and strategist of ghetto politics, got started. His first agitation was done in the polyglot, Catholic "Back of

the Yards" neighborhood in Chicago in 1937. "I went in there," he said, "to fight Fascism." Back of the Yards, then, was the heart of the Silver Shirt Country. Their idols were the "radio priest," Father Coughlin, and William Dudley Pelley.

Despite the fact that he was Jewish and the neighborhood's ideological enemy was "the Jew," Alinsky wasn't frightened off. Back of the Yards at that time was a hell-hole of hate: the Poles, Mexicans, Negroes, Lithuanians, Hungarians and Germans all despised each other and all of them resented the Irish because they happened to be the power structure in Chicago. "Actually, I had a certain advantage in being Jewish. Though they hated Jews abstractly they didn't know any personally. And I wasn't competing with any of the nationality groups. They spouted things about Jews because they had no way out. They had to have a scapegoat." Then, echoing Rustin, he said, "Once they had a program and movement developed, there wasn't any more need for scapegoats."

Alinsky sees himself as a kind of mirror-image Machiavelli. "I'm not interested in instructing the Haves in how to maintain power, but in teaching the Have-Nots how to seize it." Financed mainly by Protestant church groups, liberal labor unions and Christian industrialists, this son of a tailor from the Chicago slums has, in a thirty-year career as a professional troublemaker, stirred slum residents into action in forty-four cities across the country, including Kansas City, Detroit, Los Angeles and Rochester. Unaffiliated with any formal Jewish organizations, his model of community action seems to have been New York's Lower East Side at the turn of the century.

Many of the techniques used by Alinsky's Chicago-based Industrial Areas Foundation are not unlike those developed by the old-line socialist labor organizers of his father's generation, whose unions today form the backbone of Rustin's labor support. Born in 1909 in a run-down section of Chicago known as Jew-Town, Alinsky

had little personal contact with the great radical, anarchistic, socialistic and cultural ferment that produced New York City's Yiddish subculture. But there was still, in Chicago, the key ingredient: the Jewish trade union movement. In the early 1900's, as Rustin has pointed out, the trade union movement assumed the responsibility of organizing and protecting the downtrodden, frightened, overworked and abused immigrants who had streamed out of Russia's Pale Settlement, that three-hundred-mile-wide zone on the western perimeter of the Czar's empire in which Jews were confined by law. Hated by their American fellow workers because they undercut wages and because they lacked the self-assertiveness and the power to resist their abusers, they appeared then, even to sympathetic onlookers, as the Negro appears to outsiders today: unorganizable and apathetic. To awaken them became the self-proclaimed task of the intellectuals—in much the same way that the Negro college boys of SNCC sought to stir up the apathetic urban black masses.

The many-faceted movement on the Lower East Side that must have inspired Alinsky began with the formation of mutual and cooperative societies. Then came the unions. In the beginning they were temporary groups, formed to carry out a strike, and then disbanded. Since most of the workers were illiterate and most of the organizers were intellectuals, great stress was put on education. To keep in touch with their members, the organizers frequently acted as teachers. Their subjects, in addition to English, reading, writing and arithmetic, were social justice, economic equality, socialism, anarchism and radicalism.

Accompanying the growth of the unions and the spread of education was the formation of political factions and the creation of the Yiddish press. It was in the socialist and radical dailies, the *Arbeiter Zeitung* and the *Forward,* that Yiddish literature was widely disseminated. In the wake of labor agitation, political ferment and literary upheaval

came the Yiddish Theatre. Between 1880 and 1910 the immigrants were turned into an articulate community with a positive self-image. The community offered a political power base and became a springboard from which the children of the first generation could jump out of the Yiddish subculture and into the American mass culture.

In this "thirty years' war," the Jewish intellectuals were aided by the American Socialist Labor party, with its Yiddish- and Russian-speaking branches, and the United German Trade Unions. Among the organizers were Leo Bandes, a refugee from Czarist jails and a member of the Russian Narodniks (the Will of the People Movement), and the famed socialist Israel Knox. It was Knox who captured in words that elusive and strange creature—the non-believing Jew who yet remained a Jew: "To accept things as they are, the world as it is (with tragedy at its very heart), as already redeemed, is to cease being a Jew, is to be guilty of the gravest transgression against the prophetic heritage. To be a Jew it doesn't matter if you pray or observe dietary laws, it does matter if you cherish messianic expectancy."

It was this expectancy that moved Alinsky. For there is about this short, square man with the thick eyeglasses and unpressed clothes more than a little of the presence of the prophets of the Old Testament who preached the gospel of primitive equality to the kings of Israel as they luxuriated in their Oriental palaces. When he admonished the city of Rochester for being a "little Congo, a Southern plantation transferred North," Alinsky sounded not unlike Amos and Isaiah, who called the secular rulers of Palestine "oppressors of the poor and crushers of the needy."

The emotion that Alinsky expressed has long been suppressed by Jews. In the two thousand years of the Diaspora it surfaced only briefly. In the sixteenth century Sabbati Zevi, the False Messiah, caught up masses of poor Jews in a vision of redemption and preached freedom

from the strictures of orthodoxy. Two hundred years later the religious ecstasy of Hasidism sought to free Eastern European Jews from their perpetual sorrow and sadness. In America this millennial spirit found expression in the socialism and radicalism of the Lower East Side.

Alinsky, however, emphasizes that his empathy for the poor came not only from tradition but from personal experience. "We were very poor; my parents were Russian-Jewish immigrants and very orthodox. My mother still keeps a kosher house. She was only seventeen when she had me. As a kid I remember always living in back of a store. My idea of luxury was to live in an apartment where I could use the bathroom without one of my parents banging on the door for me to get out because a customer wanted to get in."

Alinsky's bar mitzvah was held in a synagogue that has since become a Negro Baptist Church, and the following year his parents were divorced. His father moved to Boyle Heights in Los Angeles, and prospered. Boyle Heights was then a Jewish neighborhood and has since become a Mexican slum which Alinsky has been back to organize. "Most people," he said, commenting on the coincidence, "spend their lives working their way up. But I seem to have been working my way down. Still, who's to say which is really up or really down."

In 1926 Alinsky entered the University of Chicago, where he majored in archaeology and took a number of sociology courses, which "I can't say made a deep impression on me. The Sociology Department is the kind of institution that spends $100,000 on research programs to find the location of houses of prostitution which a taxi driver could tell you for nothing."

When he was in college he became interested in the coal miners in southern Illinois who were rebelling against John L. Lewis and the United Mine Workers Union. Along with friends he chartered two trucks, filled them with food and drove down to the minefields. There he

learned his first organizational lesson: "The biggest job of a leader is to develop a rationale, a moral basis for his followers' spontaneous actions."

Foreign affairs oddly enough launched him on his career as community organizer. "All hell was breaking loose around the world. I . . . got involved raising money for the Spanish loyalists. From there I went on to help Southern sharecroppers and city people evicted for non-payment of rent. Wherever you turned there was injustice."

He struck out on his own in 1937 when he went into the Back of the Yards. His work there was supported by the city's chief Catholic Prelate, Bishop Bernard J. Sheill. It was Sheill who introduced Alinsky to Marshall Field, the millionaire scion of Marshall Field's department store. He supported Alinsky's heresy "that local people have the ingenuity to work out their own problems" with $15,000 which became the cornerstone of Industrial Areas Foundation.

With the end of the Depression and the enormous jump in the urban Negro population, Alinsky found that he was more and more called in to organize Negro communities. Without intending to be, he found himself caught up in the civil rights movement.

As he began to represent his Negro clients, he found a change in his sponsorship. "Back in the 1930's and 1940's," he said, "an organizer might expect to get some help from the CIO or from a few of the progressive AF of L unions. There wasn't a church in sight. In the fifties and sixties the churches moved into the social and political arena. They have taken over the position organized labor had a generation ago. They are the dominant force in civil rights."

In Alinsky's view the tactical dilemmas that plagued the movement stemmed at least in part from its church orientation: and thus he agreed with Rustin in condemning an appeal to abstract values. Explaining his philoso-

phy of social action he said, "I always approach people on the basis of self-interest." His oft-repeated credo is "the hell with charity." He had said emphatically, "the only thing you get is what you are strong enough to take. So you better organize." Echoing the lessons taught by the intellectual agitators of the Lower East Side he went on, "A mass organization must be built on many different issues: housing, jobs, schools, consumer prices, health, crime, representation—every aspect of life that affects the welfare and the future of the local people and their children."

Commenting on the civil rights movement, he said, "It has been built on just one issue, so it has only enlisted people to whom civil rights is paramount." "Civil rights groups," he added, "have repeatedly found themselves compelled to demonstrate not so much because a particular situation demanded action but because action, any action, was essential to keep the organization alive."

He said of civil rights leaders, "They don't know that social surgery requires the scalpel of a hard discipline. The Achilles heel of the Civil Rights Movement is the fact that it has not developed into a disciplined mass-based power organization. The victories won were not the result of mass power but of the impact of political pressure, the incredible stupidity of the upholders of the status quo and the supporting climate created by the churches. Without the ministers, priests, rabbis and nuns, I wonder who would have been on the Selma March?"

Willing to acknowledge that white liberals have done much to contribute to the climate that made progress possible, he refused, unlike Rustin, to rely upon them because "their moral indignation and sense of commitment vary inversely with their distance from the scene." He said that to be successful, agitation must be concluded by professionals, "by men and women who have a full-time commitment." The danger posed by the liberals is that they can "smother us with their damn white love."

Martin Luther King, who was before his assassination

the bridge between such new black power leaders as Carmichael and McKissick and such coalition Negroes as Rustin, Whitney Young of the Urban League and Roy Wilkins of the NAACP, had come increasingly to accept the Alinsky-inspired concept of all community organization.

At a secret meeting held on June 14, 1967, in a motel in Suffern, New York, representatives of the nine disagreeing civil rights groups met. Present were: Dr. Kenneth Clark, the Negro sociologist and resident intellectual, Martin Luther King, Roy Wilkins, Whitney Young, Floyd McKissick, Dorothy Haight of the Council of Negro Women, unnamed representatives of SNCC, and a single white man: a Jew, Jack Greenberg, the director of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund. Organizing a temporary truce, the groups decided to work together in a selected number of cities in the summer of 1967. Cleveland was chosen as the first target area. Thus, they took a leaf from the agitator's handbook used by the organizers of the Lower East Side and modeled their strategy on that fashioned by Alinsky. They focused on voter registration, housing, political action, selective buying, union integration and urban renewal, which ended in the election of a black man, Carl Stokes, as mayor. But sent away in this new effort were the part-time Jewish and white liberal supporters.

The result has received a variety of criticism, particularly from Jews, of the Alinsky-inspired tactics. Alinsky, too, has come in for his share of unfavorable comment. Though a Jew, he makes Jewry anxious, and as a result he has never had much synagogue support. Nervously, the Jewish establishment and even the most liberal of the anti-segregationists recall the popular stereotype of the "anarchist" Jew that preceded the closing of immigration in 1924 as well as the domestic anti-communist hysteria of the 1950's, which featured the execution of the Rosenbergs. The establishment does not want to be associated

with a man who openly cultivates abrasiveness and social disharmony.

The Jewish establishment is unable to connect the new Negro community organization with the turn-of-the-century struggle of the Lower East Side because the ferocious quality of that life has been forgotten. The experiences of those years have been sentimentalized, the smells of the streets dispersed and the squalor and tension submerged in official memory.

Although neither Alinsky's operations in Syracuse and Rochester nor the civil rights target area in Cleveland has exactly duplicated the ferment and the success of the Lower East Side, they have, for better or for worse, made race the issue around which the black ghettos will be organized; just as Jewishness was the foundation upon which the social structure was built half a century ago in New York.

The urban confrontation between Jews and Negroes will result in a further alienation of Jews and in increased hostility between Jews and Negroes. The stores that will be boycotted, the tenaments to be hit by rent strikes, the collection agents to be driven out are mostly Jewish, as are the remaining white politicians; for the only whites left in the ghetto, besides the police, are Jews.

9

ZIONISM AND BLACK NATIONALISM

It would be hard to find a more unlikely combination of historical figures than Theodor Herzl, the erudite sophisticated Paris-based nineteenth-century Jewish journalist and Marcus Garvey, the twentieth-century self-educated Jamaican founder of the Universal Negro Improvement Association. Yet, Herzl and Garvey are alike in being the seminal figures in their peoples' striving toward ethnic and racial homelands.

Herzl with his long thick dark beard and the roly-poly shiny black Garvey in the academic cap and gown he affected, served as father figures to their followers. In their personal differences and similar visions, they epitomized Zionism and Black Nationalism, the two most widely accepted forms in which Jews and Negroes cast their positive self-images.

Herzl was born 27 years before Garvey in Budapest, Hungary. By 1860 standards, his family was wealthy. To-

tally irreligious, he was made conscious of his Jewish heritage by anti-Semitism. His first taste of this bitter fruit came at school. A teacher scornfully referred to Jews as pagans. The Herzls promptly removed their son from that gymnasium.

Herzl recalled three other incidents which had a profound influence on him. When he was eighteen he read a newspaper account of an anti-Semitic tirade delivered in the German Parliament by Frederick Stoeker and noted that there were no protests from the assembled politicians. "The Jews," he then wrote in his notebook, "must find a country of their own."

More decisive was an experience in Mainz, Germany. Emerging from a crowded tavern, a man shouted "Hep, hep" at him. The crowd of drunks roared back "Hep, hep." That cry, Herzl learned, was the battle slogan of the crusaders when they stormed Jerusalem. Its literal translation is *Hierosolyma est Perdita,* Jerusalem must fall. In the parlance of the nineteenth-century German street it meant "Dirty Jew."

In October 1894 when Herzl was working in Paris as a reporter for the Viennese newspaper *Neue Freie Presse,* he covered the Dreyfus trial. The case concerned a Jewish captain in the French Army who was accused of treason. Dreyfus was convicted not because he was guilty, there was no real evidence to support the prosecution's charge, but because he was Jewish. Herzl was a witness to the punctilious officer's public humiliation on the parade ground of the Ecole Militaire. As the unfortunate soldier's epaulets were ripped from his shoulders and again when his saber was broken thousands of spectators howled, "Down with Dreyfus. Down with the Jews." All that Dreyfus could answer was, "I am innocent. Long live France."

Herzl, ashamed and angered, began to think seriously of the problem posed by Jewish identity and the seeming inability of even the most westernized Jews to be assimilated into European life. The result of these reflections

was a brochure called *Judenstaat* or *The Jewish State.* In it he proposed an end to the 2,000-year Jewish exile. "We are a people, we are one people, regardless of where we live . . . We are a nation because we are a historic group of people whose belonging together is clear to see. We are a people whether we like it or not—it's our common enemy that makes us a people, as it has been true through history. In the hour of crisis, we stick together and we suddenly discover our strength. Yes, we have the strength to create a state, and a model state at that. We have the human and material resources that are necessary for such ends . . . They who will it, will have their state . . . At long last, we shall live as free men on our own soil, and shall die in peace in our own homeland . . . And what we shall try to do there for our own good will be a force for good and a blessing for all mankind."

The publication of *Judenstaat* acted as a catalyst. In 1897 the first Zionist congress was called. It was at this meeting in Geneva that the initial steps were taken that led to the creation of the state of Israel.

Marcus Garvey's early life could not have been more different than Herzl's. Born in the quiet little town of St. Ann's Bay on the northern coast of Jamaica he was the eleventh and last child of a stonemason. He was of unmixed Negro stock. His father claimed to be descended from the Maroon African slaves whose heroic exploits in defense of their own freedom form an important part of Jamaican history and folklore.

In giving an account of his life, Garvey stated that as a small child he was unaware of color differences and played with all the neighborhood children. One of his closest friends, he remembered, was the daughter of a white Methodist minister. It was she who gave him his first lesson in racism. "When she was fourteen she was to be sent to Scotland to complete her education and she told me then that she could no longer see me or write to me because I was a Nigger."

The question of race has always been significant in Jamaica. It was created by the Spanish conquistadors, who, having killed off the native Indian population, imported African slaves to work the island's sugar plantations. Their British successors continued the practice. When Garvey was born in 1887, 98 percent of Jamaica's 600,000 residents were Negro. The other and ruling 2 percent were white Anglo-Saxons.

In contrast to the United States where the whites make no distinction between blacks and tans, that refinement being reserved for the Negro community, the ruling Jamaicans recognized mulattoes as a separate class. In Garvey's lifetime this mulatto middle class sought, as do the generally lighter upper-class American Negroes, to preserve their superior status by dampening down racial discontent. In addition the mulattoes dissociated themselves from the poorer darker Negroes whom they treated with contempt.

Garvey, who was very dark, nurtured in turn a lifelong hatred of light Negroes. He believed them to be traitors and he scoffed at their dreams of being assimilated into the white mainstream.

Forced to leave school at fourteen, he became an apprentice printer. By the time he was twenty he had been both a zealous believer and an ardent critic of the trade union movement. As an organizer of a successful printers' strike he found himself jobless at its conclusion. He was the only black foreman involved and the single striking employee to lose his position. He associated this loss with bigotry in the white and mulatto union hierarchy which had negotiated the final contract. This experience convinced Garvey that labor could never be the vehicle on which Negroes could ride to equality. It also soured him on integrated betterment efforts.

Travel in Costa Rica, Panama, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela and the United States demonstrated to him that the black man's degradation was ubiquitous. In 1914 he

created the Universal Negro Improvement Association. In its manifesto the UNIA declared itself to be "an organization among Negroes that is seeking to improve the conditions of the race, with the view of establishing a Nation in Africa where Negroes will be given the opportunity to develop by themselves without creating the hatred and animosity that now exists in countries of the white race . . . The time has come to give the Negro a chance to develop himself to a moral standard man. The Negro to do this must have a country of his own."

Just as Herzl sought to lift the fearful weight of bigotry off the back of the European Jew by giving him a homeland, so too Garvey dreamed of a Black Zion. Both men found their strongest supporters among the urban impoverished and oppressed. Herzl-dedicated followers were the ghetto dwellers of Eastern Europe. Garvey's most fervent converts to the green, white and black flag he designed came from the black slums of North America.

Garvey, in his thrust toward a black nation, scorned the goals of social equality and integration. He called instead for race pride and separatism. He even called for a black God "in the likeness of the race." These cries struck responsive chords. His UNIA became the first Negro movement with a mass following. The Black Star Shipping Lines, the Negro Factories Corporation, The Black Cross, The Black Legion and a series of newspapers and magazines were the spores of the mushrooming UNIA.

Although Garvey's black business enterprises eventually failed and he was convicted of fraud, largely because he insisted on serving as his own lawyer, his ideas were never discredited. They merely lay dormant for a generation. The concepts of Black Pride and Black Nationalism, which Garvey did so much to propagate, now dominate Negro intellectual and political life.

On the surface it might seem incongruous to compare the Jews' successful fight to make Palestine into the land of Israel and the Negroes' alternate strivings for an Afri-

can homeland and/or a separate black American nation. The incongruities vanish when a close examination is made of the social, cultural and economic roots of Zionism and Black Nationalism.

Although both in their latest versions are secular, their history, their emotional content, and their eschatology is not just radical—it is also religious. The conditions of oppression, bigotry, poverty, ignorance, superstition, uprootedness and alienation that made Zionists of nineteenth-century Jews have made Black Nationalists out of American Negroes. Both Zionism and Black Nationalism have their antecedents in the failed chiliastic Christian sects of late medieval Europe.

Norman Cohn, the Scotch-Jewish historian, wrote of the Christian millennial sects who preceded Zionism and Black Nationalism in his impressive study, *The Pursuit Of The Millennium:* "Between the close of the 11th century and the first half of the 16th century it repeatedly happened in Europe that the desire of the poor to improve the material conditions of their lives became transfused with phantasies of a new Paradise on earth, a world purged of suffering and sin, a kingdom of saints. The history of those centuries was . . . sprinkled with innumerable struggles between the privileged and the less privileged. Usually those risings had strictly limited aims . . . or . . . were mere outbreaks of destructive rage provoked by sheer misery. But risings could also occur which had a quite different scope."

The other risings as outlined by Cohn were: The Early Crusades, The Movement for the Resurrection of the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II, the secret Flagellant Society of Thuringia, the Amaurians, the Taborites, and the Anabaptists. All these movements were enthused by a religious emotion and inspired by a revolutionary eschatology which prophesied a heaven on earth. They arose, as did Jewish Messianism and the cults of the modern urban blacks, among people suffering both severe economic and cultural dislocation.

Said historian Cohn, "whether in the Middle Ages or in the twentieth century, when the normal, familiar pattern of life has already undergone a disruption so severe as to seem irremediable. When a way of life . . . is . . . rendered impracticable, a situation of peculiar strain is created, . . . what makes such a situation . . . more intolerable than simple habitual poverty and subjection—is that it arouses not only the rational anxieties of the adult but also anxieties springing from the forgotten experiences of childhood . . . the appearance of a messianic leader preaching the doctrine of the final struggle and the coming of the new age can produce remarkable reactions."

Medieval and modern Jews in their frequent peregrinations across the map of Europe; from South to North and from West to East have been subjected to just such strains as Cohn describes. The object of religious hatred, the medieval Jewish populations of Worms, Mainz, Cologne, Regensburg, Treves and Prague were literally destroyed by marauding crusaders. Expelled later from England, Provence and Spain, Vienna, Wittenberg, Hamburg, Bremen, Olmütz, Trent, Nuremberg, Ulm and Magdeburg; barred from the states of Northern Italy; sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Jews fled to Poland, Russia and Eastern Europe. Everywhere they were segregated into ghettos. Periodically the populations of even these dismal reservations were subjected to pogroms in which the men were massacred, the women raped and all were robbed. It is not surprising that these poverty stricken victims yearned through the millennia for a land of Zion that might geographically coincide with Palestine, but was in fact a kind of heaven on earth. The results of these internal yearnings and the responses to the terrible external happenings were a series of chiliastic movements within Judaism which culminated in modern Zionism. Theodor Herzl's *Judenstat* did not spring full-grown on an unsuspecting Jewish world. This particular world had long been preparing for it.

The major theme of the Old Testament is that of Homeland Found, Homeland Lost, Homeland Regained. It is a theme which held much meaning for the Galuth Jews of post-Biblical times. After the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 A.D. and the Roman dispersal of the Palestinian Jews throughout their Empire, countless generations of Jews filled their lives with dreams of a return.

Not unlike their frequent persecutors, the chiliastic Christians, these millennial Jews believed that a Messiah would come and redeem them, bring an end to all their misfortunes, punish their enemies and on Judgment Day lead them back to their ancient homeland where they would live forever in God's kingdom by the sea.

Periodically a self-proclaimed Messiah would appear in times of particular persecution and upheaval to take advantage of these fantasies. In the first half of the fifth century such a cult formed around a young man named Moses who proposed to lead the Jews of his native Crete to the "Land of Israel." They would, he claimed, walk dry-shod across the sea. Expectantly hundreds plunged off the island's steep cliffs and drowned.

In the eighth century Abu Isa, a Persian-Jewish tailor, convinced thousands of his fellow Persian Jews that he was the Messiah. Raising an army of 10,000 he attacked the country's Arab overlords. Defeated, he was executed.

Throughout the 200 years of the Crusades, the persecution of Jews by chiliastic Christian sects and Mohammedan rulers resulted in the appearance of literally dozens of Jewish Messiahs in France, Greece, Spain, Morocco, Persia and Mesopotamia.

Essential to Jewish Millennialism is mysticism, the most popular strain of which was called Cabalism. Originating in classical times and inspired by Greek, Oriental and Christian gnosticism, it was practiced exclusively by the intellectuals until the thirteenth century. A mixed bag of tricks, Cabalism included a belief in the stars, in lucky

numbers, the transmigration of the soul and faith in the eventual arrival of a redeemer—a kind of first coming for the Jews.

These same elements found expression among central European Christians in the troubled times that preceded and followed the Reformation and the end of feudalism. And not so oddly they figured prominently in the thought of that twentieth-century black Messiah, Marcus Garvey. Astrology and numerology are still features of today's Black Muslim doctrine and of Black Nationalistic theology.

One of the chief concerns of the early Jewish mystics was the calculation of the exact date of the Messiah's arrival. Playing on the popularity among the Jewish masses of this numbers game was the most famous Messiah of them all, Sabbati Zevi. A strangely beautiful young man from Smyrna in Asiatic Turkey, he announced his mission at the conclusion of the Yom Kippur service in 1625. Literally thousands of Near Eastern and European Jews prepared to follow him on a triumphant march to Jerusalem, which never took place.

Zevi's movement took on all the strange aspects of an orgiastic cult. In the wild expectation that the Day of Judgment was at hand, poor Jews abandoned the stringent kashruth dietary laws, broke with the ancient puritanical sexual code and deserted the rationalistic and legalistic forms of Judaism. These, the poor bequeathed to the rich —those few Jews who were bankers to kings, agents to bishops and mercantile figures. Zabbatism spoke not only of a world to come but of change in the property relationships of the world already in existence. It was not only a fantasied escape from the agonies imposed by the gentiles, but a real revolt against the snobberies and abuses of the aristocratic Jews. Zabbatism carried within it the seeds of class revolution.

This revolutionary strain has been characteristic of all

subsequent chiliastic sects, whether Jewish, Christian or Black Nationalist. So strong were the feelings that Zevi aroused, particularly in the lands within the confines of the Holy Roman Empire, then in the throes of a thirty-year civil war, that even his conversion to Mohammedanism to save himself from execution by the Sultan of Turkey failed to extinguish the flame that he had lit.

A century after the Cabalist Zevi's death, a second and still existing form of Jewish mysticism developed in Eastern Europe, where modern Zionism later found its strongest support. The appearance of Hasidism coincided with the first Polish and Russian persecutions of the Jews. Israel Baal Shem-Tov, Master of the Good Name, was its creator. Although he never spoke of a return to a geographical Zion, Hasidism was nonetheless the direct spiritual predecessor of modern Zionism. The major tenet of the Baal Shem-Tov was joy in life and the abandonment of ritual. Prayer rather than study was to be the way of communion with God. Once again the consciousness of spiritual power was given to the illiterate masses. Thousands seeking escape from the constant anxiety created by the random continuous barbarism of the Polish and Russian populations found in Hasidism a meaning for their lives. In rejecting the strict formalism of the rabbis the Hasids also prepared the way for the eventual abandonment of orthodoxy and the acceptance of the secular religion of Zionism.

Zionism was in fact the twentieth-century response to the deadly persecution of our times. It was sparked by the Dreyfus case, burst into flames after the infamous 1903 Kishinev pogrom and reached forest-fire proportions with the Nazi Holocaust that took the lives of one-third of world Jewry.

The creation of the modern state of Israel in 1948 was the culmination of a centuries-long historic movement. It answered a practical need by providing a physical home

for persecuted, unwanted and stateless Jews. It answered a psychological need by giving the Jews in the Galuth an identity of which they could be proud.

"Whatever Jews might do to the contrary, they never lose a sense of racial consciousness which is firmly rooted in the great national memories of the people," declaimed Moses Hess, the nineteenth-century German Jew.

"The only proper remedy to anti-Semitism," echoed Leon Pinsker, his Odessa-born contemporary, "is auto-emancipation . . . the creation of a Jewish nationality . . . the international Jewish question must receive a national solution."

Still others proclaimed, fifty years before the reality of Israel, the need for a revival of Hebrew so that "it might be the language of the resurrected Jewish state."

Oddly or perhaps not so oddly Zionism became real at just that moment when the physical ghetto walls were being torn down. The new age of science was being proclaimed and secularism seemed triumphant. It was, believed the Jews, only a matter of time and of choice before their historic personage disappeared. In a stampede toward emancipation, nineteenth-century Hebrews doffed their kaftans and shaved their pious shaggy sideburns known as *payess* only to find the door to the new Europe as securely barred as the old one had been. This time the unyielding lock was nationalism. Based on ill-conceived theories of race, this novel patriotism nearly always lapsed into anti-Semitism. When assimilation proved impossible to achieve European Jews, too, turned chauvinistic.

It was only in America where Jews were able to break out of their caste role that Zionism became not a substitute for assimilation, but an aid to it. It assuaged the Jew's guilt for abandoning his distinctive Judaism and made it possible for him to still claim his Jewishness—albeit in a form socially acceptable to the outside gentile world.

In the crazy quilt of ethnic groups the reality of the state of Israel put American Jews, not only in their own

minds but in the minds of their neighbors, on an equal footing with Poles, Swedes, Italians, Hungarians, Irishmen and even the English. Like these others, Jews had a homeland of their own even if it was one that neither they nor their ancestors had set foot on for 2,000 years.

Assimilation, too, is the obvious goal of Negroes. It is not, however, any more realizable for the vast majority of twentieth-century black Americans than it was for the bulk of nineteenth-century European Jewry. Rejected as were European Jews on what seems the threshold of equality, Negroes are in increasing numbers embracing Black Zionism.

In the light of this history the demands of such Negro intellectuals as Robert S. Browne to "initiate a national dialogue on the desirability of partitioning the U.S. into two separate and independent nations, one to be a homeland for the whites, and the other to be a homeland for black Americans," do not seem so outlandish. Browne, an Assistant Professor of Economics at New Jersey's Fairleigh Dickinson University, made this proposal at the Newark Black Power conference held on the eve of that city's devastating 1967 summer riot. Nor do the alternate but not necessarily contradictory demands for the incorporation of black history courses taught by black men in the public schools made by such Negro street corner agitators as Philadelphia's goateed Walter Palmer appear bizarre. The New York City public school system already offers a course in Swahili.

The statements of Negro men such as Garvey, Elijah Muhammad and Malcolm X are in many ways comparable to those of Herzl, Pinsker and Hess.

Garvey proclaimed, "A race without authority and power is a race without respect . . . I am only the forerunner of an awakened Africa that shall never go back to sleep." Addressing a huge foot-stomping summer crowd at the 1920 UNIA Harlem convention he preached, "We are the descendants of a suffering people . . . We are

descendants of a people determined to suffer no longer . . . We do not desire what has belonged to others, though others have always sought to deprive us of that which belongs to us . . . If Europe is for Europeans, then Africa shall be for the black peoples of the world . . . The other races have countries of their own and it is time for the 4,000,000,000 Negroes to claim Africa for themselves."

Elijah Muhammad, who before his conversion was Elijah Poole of Sandersville, Georgia, and is currently Allah's Messenger from the Temple of Islam in Chicago, reiterated Garvey's theme, adding race hatred to race love. "Separation of the so-called Negroes from their slave-master's children is a MUST. It is the only solution to our problem," he declares.

Possessed of an eschatology that cannot be distinguished from that which characterized the chiliastic sects of the middle ages, America's Muslim Prophet or, as he refers to himself, "the Little Brown Lamb of Allah" preached in the year 1958, "You must see that this is the time of our separation and the Judgment of this world which you and I have known . . ."

Hitting hard on the theme of self-regard, Elijah Muhammad is a great believer in the power of positive thinking for the Black Man in America. Declaring, as did Marcus Garvey before him, his faith in "a universal black brotherhood," the Messenger preaches, "our population runs into the billions, and the earth belongs to us. We are the original owners of the earth and will take it and rule it again. This is the Time."

Malcolm X, Elijah Muhammad's most famous acolyte until he relapsed into heresy, built on his leader's great theme. "Do you know why," he asked, "the white man really hates you? It's because every time he sees your face, he sees a mirror of his crime—and his guilty conscience can't bear to face it!

"Every White Man in America, when he looks into a black man's eyes should fall to his knees and say I'm sorry,

I'm sorry—my kind has committed history's greatest crime against your kind; will you give me a chance to atone? But do you brothers and sisters expect any white man to do that? No, you know better! And why won't he do it? Because he can't do it. The White Man was created a devil to bring chaos upon the earth."

Whites, in particular Jews and liberals, as well as middle-class Negroes, hardly knew what to make of Malcolm X when he burst with meteoric impact through their television screens. They thought him a politician when in fact he was a prophet and a preacher. His anointed task was not to prescribe a solution but rather to describe the horrors of the hell on earth that is the Black Man's America and to forecast the Day of Judgment when the forces of righteousness would conquer the forces of evil.

His audience, like those of the Jewish Messiahs and the medieval Christian redeemers, was made up of the displaced, the dislocated and the alienated. Overcome with feelings of despair, impotence and rage they looked to Malcolm as to another Elijah.

In the wake of the Prophet's success have come the politicians: Stokely Carmichael and Rap Brown. It is really a very short hop between white devil and honky. Impatient for Judgment Day they have taken it upon themselves to bring about the Apocalypse.

Like the Zionism it parallels, Black Nationalism has a long history. Its roots go back to the days of slavery.

On May 10th, 1830 one Mr. Burges of Rhode Island addressed the United States Congress, "Africa," he pleaded, "like a bereaved Mother holds out her hands to America and implores you to send back her exiled children."

Burges spoke for the American Colonization Society, an organization of free, largely Northern, educated Negroes. "The question," as the Society saw it, was "not whether our condition can be bettered by emigration, but whether it can be made worse. If not, then, there is no part of the widespread universe, where our social and political con-

ditions are not better than here in our native country, and nowhere in the world as proscribed on account of color."

Founded in 1816 by Paul Culfee, a New England Negro sailor who had actually financed the return journey to Africa of slaves, the Society's dream of a Black Zion culminated in the creation of the State of Liberia. Liberia, however, did not prove to be the Promised Land. Up until the outbreak of the Civil War free Negroes continued to discuss other possible sites of emigration. Among the most popular places advanced were Haiti, the Niger Valley and Central America. Discussions were actually begun first with Haitian officials and then with the British overlords of West Africa. In their fruitlessness they foreshadowed those of Herzl with the Sultan of Turkey, the Kaiser and various English Parliamentarians on the rights of Jews to colonize Palestine, East Africa and/or the Sinai Peninsula.

The Civil War put a quietus on black emigration. The subject was not raised again until the overthrow of Reconstruction. Then in 1878 a South Carolina committee of Negroes headed by Bishop Turner solemnly consecrated a ship to carry "a load of humanity back to their African homeland."

The boat, designed to carry 160 persons, took on 206. Twenty-three passengers died enroute to Liberia. The survivors found themselves in a primitive land where no plans had been made for them. Consequently, the arrival of a second batch of emigrants was delayed indefinitely. Failure did little to dampen the ebullient spirits of the Bishop. As late as 1895 he proclaimed, "The Negro has no manhood future in the United States. He may seek out an existence for generations to come, but he can never be a Man—full, symmetrical and undwarfed."

Despite the obvious truth of the Bishop's remarks regarding the condition of Southern Negroes, and the overwhelming majority of Negroes then lived in the South, the idea of emigration to Africa never came to fruition though the idea of intra-American emigration did. At just the

moment when the Bishop's boat was launched, 50,000 Negroes from the western Confederate states began a remarkable trek to Kansas. The leader of this strange odyssey was Benjamin (better known as Pap) Singleton.

Soon after the flamboyant septuagenarian began to lead the columns of marching Negroes "to the Promised Land," he earned the nickname Moses. This Black Moses, who had as a young man escaped from slavery, chose Kansas because it was John Brown country. Kansas to Singleton and his followers loomed as a New Jerusalem. To these manumitted people still caught in the brutal vise of caste, Singleton had all the appeal and charisma that a Sabbati Zevi had for the similarly victimized Jews of the early seventeenth century. Kansas no less than Palestine was the Zion that lay across the Jordan of reality.

"The great God of glory worked in me," Pap declared. "I have had open interviews with the living spirit of God for my people and we are going to leave the South."

Kansas was no more a Promised Land than Liberia. The migration movement of January and February 1879 collapsed as quickly as it had begun. But the dream did not die. A decade later Arkansas and Texas, rather than Kansas, were seen as the new lands of milk and honey. Once more Negroes trudged toward the city of God only to discover it to be just a suburb of the same old world. In 1915, enticed north by job opportunities in war industries, they began the migration that has yet to stop.

But forces other than those of out-migration were at work within the segregated communities that emerged from the Reconstruction. The single most important institution created by the newly freed slaves was the Negro church. Its existence proved that a Negro institution could succeed. The churches offered a sense of community to otherwise alienated blacks. Although traditionally antinationalistic, they fed the fantasy of Black Zionism with the maintenance in Africa of colored foreign religious missions.

The concept of separation got additional boosts from both Booker T. Washington and his bitter critic W. E. B. Du Bois. Washington, who had a Mosaic if not a Messianic vision of a Negro Community modeled on Jewish ghetto society, emphasized self-help in the uplifting of the Negro masses. Economic self-sufficiency and racial separation were his mottos. Washington's lack of confidence in direct political action and his acceptance of social separation as a means of accommodation to white hostility are still echoed by Black Nationalists.

Though he despised the founder for what he believed to be a craven surrender to white bigotry, Du Bois, too, was influenced by Washington's separationist ideas. While advocating full participation by Negroes in American political life, he also pressed for black unity and saw in such a coalescence an instrument of colored advancement.

As early as 1897 Du Bois was arguing that "Negroes in the United States are not only American citizens but members of an historic race." Like Garvey, with whom he also carried on a deadly vendetta, Du Bois predicted that "the 8,000,000 people of Negro descent in the United States of America must soon come to realize that if they are to take their place in the vanguard of Pan-Negroism, then their destiny is not absorption by White Americans . . . Their destiny is not a servile imitation of Anglo-Saxon culture as a race (Negroes) have a contribution to make to civilization and humanity. Which no other race can make . . . it is the duty of the Americans of Negro descent as a body to maintain their social identity until this mission of the Negro people has become a practical possibility."

The implication of this international Negroism, actually a variant on the theme of Black Nationalism, led Du Bois to the Pan-African movement. Initially in 1919 its purpose was the political unification of Africa. "We are," he proclaimed, "the harbinger of that black tomorrow which is yet destined to soften the whiteness of the Teutonic today."

Occupying the cultural end of the spectrum in a position roughly analogous to that held by the Habim Achad Movement (the group that pushed for the propagation of Hebrew in preparation for the time when the Jews had a national homeland) was the World Wide Friends of Africa group. Also known as the House of Knowledge, they, like the Habim Achadites, believed "a race without knowledge of its history is like a tree without roots."

Religious Black Nationalism as distinguished from the outwardly secular variety found its first spokesman in Noble Drew Ali—Garvey's contemporary and competitor. Drew began preaching to the newly arrived Negroes of the North in the decade following World War I.

Baptized Timothy Drew in North Carolina, he was an expressman in Newark, New Jersey, before becoming a "Prophet in Islam." It was there in 1913 that he founded his Moorish American Science Temple. Expanding, he opened houses of worship in Pittsburgh, Detroit and Chicago. Although Drew had little formal education, he became convinced that his version of Islam was the instrument of Negro Salvation. Accordingly, he drew up a "secret text" he dubbed the Holy Koran. It was a slim pamphlet filled with a mixture of Islamic and Christian aphorisms, anecdotes about the life of Jesus, and quotes from his rival Marcus Garvey whom he anointed "The John the Baptist of Moorish-American Science Temple," much to the latter's annoyance.

American Negroes according to the Koran by Drew Ali were Asiatics. "We are," he cried, "Moors whose forebears inhabited Morocco before they were enslaved." Then as if to justify this bizarre historical notion, he continued, "For a people to amount to anything it is necessary to have a name and land. The so-called Negroes must be taught their national origin."

Going out on a withered limb of the Black Nationalist phylogenetic tree, Drew declared that Negroes "must refuse to be called Negroes, black folk, colored people or

Ethiopians. They must instead call themselves Asiatics, Moors or Moorish Americans." In addition to religious leadership Drew Ali set a precedent by establishing a number of small collectively owned businesses.

In 1929 his leadership was contested by Sheik Claude Greene, a former butler to Jewish philanthropist and supporter of polite Negro uplift, Julius Rosenwald. Greene was murdered and Noble Drew Ali was arrested. While out on bail, he disappeared. His place was taken by a salesman of bolt cloth goods, Wallace D. Fard, later known as Prophet Fard. The Prophet eventually broke with the Muslims and formed his own religion. It is called the Nation of Islam and his followers are better if incorrectly known as the Black Muslims, and they are led by Elijah Muhammad.

Inadvertently Drew pointed to that which separates American Negroes not only from the Jews but from the rest of mankind: their lack of history. Slavery annihilated culture, language, family and even self. After emancipation the Negro emerged a naked man, a newborn in an old world with an enormous need for group as well as personal identity.

Competing with the Garveyites, the Moors and the Muslims in this field of instant history were the Abyssinians of Chicago. Their teachings were contained in a small pamphlet which could be purchased along with an Ethiopian flag and a picture of the "Prince of Ethiopia" for one dollar. The Abyssinians emphasized the "sacred" connection between Israel and Ethiopia. Israel, they claimed, was the "source of civilization" while the Ethiopians to whom this civilization was entrusted would be the "people of redemption." Although it is not clear whether the prophesied treaty relating to "the return of dark-skinned people to Africa and the treaty between the United States and Abyssinia" would take place before or after the Apocalypse, the true believers were assured that "God's chosen people will be all right." Oddly for a group that claimed a close con-

nection with the children of Israel, it was ferociously anti-white. True, Jews according to this Gospel were dark-skinned. The white Jews of the western world were denounced as frauds.

This virulently nationalistic semi-religious association drew wide attention following the dramatic slaying of two of its members on June 20, 1920. The killings were the aftermath of a riotous parade and ceremony which terminated in the burial of two American flags. Led by Oscar McGavick and Grover C. Redding the Abyssinians, in their attacks on the traditional symbols of American patriotism, curiously pre-shadowed the Black Power Movement of the sixties. Redding, on his arrest following the murders and flag desecrations, stated, "My mission is marked in the Bible. Even if they have captured me, some other leaders will rise up and lead the Ethiopian back to Africa . . . The Ethiopians do not belong here and should be taken back to their own country. Their time was up in 1919. They came in 1619. The Bible pointed out that they were to disappear in 300 years." Redding's reliance on numerology, like that of the Garveyites, Moors and Black Muslims, to foretell the date of the Resurrection of the Black Peoples of America links aspects of Black Nationalism with medieval Zionism and chiliastic Christianity.

More striking still is the resemblance between the authoritarian structure of the various sects of Jewish Messianism, Christian millennialism and Black Nationalism. All were or are built around the charismatic personality of the leader cum Messiah cum Moses. In these terms, Marcus Garvey was no different in kind than Jan Hus; Malcolm X bears comparison to Thomas Muntzer and Pap Singleton to Sabbati Zevi. The prophetic role was and is particularly attractive to leaders of the black masses.

Lower-class Negroes like other uneducated or ill-educated people are superstitious and susceptible to exploitation of their religious sensitivities. Most of the founders of these nationalist movements, prior to the emergence of the

Black Power intellectuals in the mid-1960's, were like the early religious forerunners of modern Zionism and chiliastic Christianity, persons without significant social status or prestige.

In their efforts to reconstruct a past, however, these Negroes have no parallel in history. Though the versions of their revealed word vary and are often contradictory, all have disdained the appellation Negro. "It is," explains a modern-day nationalist, Walter Palmer of the Black Peoples Unity Movement, "a slave term."

Black Nationalists of all stripes have sought not only to differentiate themselves from the white center of power but to dissociate themselves from the shameful connotations of the word Negro. So widespread has this desire become that in the late sixties even such militant integrationists as Martin Luther King substituted the word black for the term Negro.

Black ideology alone, however, could not have created the mass movements of the 1920's when thousands of Negroes claimed to be "Asiatics," "Moors," "Muslims" and "Ethiopians" while millions gave their alliance to a stubby little Jamaican who hoped with their help to make himself "His Highness the Potentate of the African Republic." Reliable estimates place Garvey's following in the range of six million. At its apogee in 1924, one half of the entire colored population of the United States was associated in one way or another with the would-be potentate.

The Garvey phenomenon like the Sabbati Zevi madness that afflicted half the Jews of seventeenth-century Europe grew directly out of the severe dislocation of the population. Between 1916 and 1918 more than half a million blacks moved north. At the end of World War I large numbers of semiliterate unskilled Southern Negroes settled in the big cities of the North. The post-war recession deprived many of the jobs they had traveled north to get. As unemployment spread, the immigrants' initial feelings of delight at the comparative equality of the North gave

way to discouragement as it became apparent that even in this fabled land, Negroes were still second-class citizens herded into black ghettos, the last to be hired, the first to be fired. It was to this group of poorly educated, suspicious and disillusioned blacks that Marcus Garvey, Noble Drew, Prophet Fard and the Abyssinians made their greatest appeal.

World War I itself with its propaganda about "the American way of life" raised the hopes of Negroes and at the same time emphasized their inferior role in a nation that prided itself on a democratic heritage. Army service, particularly overseas, was an eye-opener to many colored Americans. The absence of obvious racial prejudice in France proved to be an unforgettable experience.

Increased mobility of the Negro population during the war gave rise to increased friction between the races. There were several clashes between Negro soldiers and white civilians in the South. In September 1917 troops from the 24th Infantry Regiment were involved in a riot with white civilians in Houston. A summary trial resulted in the execution of thirteen soldiers and life imprisonment for eleven others. This example of "federal justice" was deeply felt by Negroes and for years afterward it was the subject of bitter denunciation in the Negro press.

Race tension was not restricted to the Armed Services or the South. In 1917 the city of East St. Louis, Illinois, was the scene of a violent riot growing out of the employment of Negroes in a factory holding government war contracts. At least forty Negroes lost their lives in a struggle that lasted for days. Lynchings took an upward turn. In 1917 there were thirty-eight Negro victims. In 1918 there were forty-eight. These outbreaks were only a prelude to the bloody events of 1919. From June to December of that year there were twenty-six race riots. Unlike the explosions of the sixties which saw Negroes on the rampage against white property, these earlier bloodlettings featured white assaults on Negro persons. Nor were the conflicts confined

to one section of the country. They developed wherever the races were competing for scarce housing and even scarcer employment. Unlike their rural compeers these newly urbanized Negroes refused to be intimidated and fought to defend themselves and their rights.

In July of 1919 a Longview, Texas, lynching ended in a riot. Negroes resisted the white mob. In retaliation the infuriated whites burned down the black part of town.

The following week there was a violent white attack on Negroes in Washington, D.C., following an irresponsible news account of black assaults on Caucasian women.

On July 27 a Negro boy drowned in Lake Michigan off a white bathing area in Chicago. Rumors that he had been murdered by whites fanned the flames of an intense racial hatred that had been building up over the months of heavy Negro migration into the city. For thirteen days Chicago was virutally without law despite the presence of the state militia. During that same summer, race riots occurred in Knoxville, Tennessee; Elaine, Arkansas; and Omaha, Nebraska.

The rebirth of the Klan and the nationwide increase in the obvious signs of bigotry contributed to the bitter mood of cynicism that gripped ghetto Negroes. Up to this time, no Negro organization had seriously attempted to organize the black underclasses. Booker T. Washington, the NAACP and the Urban League all depended upon white liberals, usually Jewish, for support. In order to accommodate this middle- and upper-class assistance, Negro leaders refused to push for the kind of social programs that would benefit the black masses or to tailor their appeals to the prejudices, suspicions, aspirations and limited intellectual attainments of the poor blacks. The result was that the leadership of this new lumpen proletariat was left entirely in the hands of half-educated, partially demented demagogues. Of the Negro middle and upper classes, only the handful of Harlem Renaissance artists showed any sympathy for the plight of the downtrodden. Their talents,

however, were not political. The result was the rapid growth of black religious and nationalist cults in the 1920's.

Weakened by splits within the Garveyite and Moorish movements and overtaken by the Depression and the oncoming Second World War the Black Nationalist tide receded in the thirties and forties but did not disappear.

In 1932 the Peace Movement of Ethiopia was inaugurated. Taking a leaf from Herzl's book, it urged Negroes to support racist Senator Bilbo's Repatriation to Africa Bill. Herzl, in his desperate desire to find a homeland for the Jews, had actually met with virulently anti-Semitic Czarist officials in the early 1900's to get their endorsement of a native country for unwanted Russian Jews. Neither Peace Movement leaders nor Herzl succeeded in securing these strange alliances.

In 1935 Oscar C. Brown set up the short-lived National Movement for the Establishment of the 49th State. He demanded then, as CORE and Black Power leaders do now, the establishment of a Negro state within the United States.

In New York City the memory of Marcus Garvey was kept alive in the thirties and forties by Carlos Cook and James R. Lawson of the African Pioneer Movement and the United African Nationalist Movement.

Cook, a race agitator, was part of a native American fascist coalition in the years preceding World War II. His presence in that company revealed the strong anti-Jewish feelings among many Black Nationalists. Despite the similarity between the organisms of Jewish and Black Zionism, anti-Semitism has long been a feature of Black Nationalism.

Marcus Garvey openly and frequently expressed distaste for Jews. Du Bois' Buy Black campaigns of the twenties more than once hinted that the whites who were the particular oppressors of the Negroes were Jews.

The black religious cults have largely denigrated the

American Jews whom they know by claiming that the true sons of Israel were the Black Falashas of Ethiopia whom they didn't know.

In the late 1930's, S. A. Davis, the black chairman of the Advisory Board of the Joint Council of Repatriations, adopted anti-Semitism as a plank in his platform in the hopes that the bait of bigotry would induce the all-white American Nazi Party to help finance the immigration of council members to Liberia and other African nations. It did not.

The Nation of Islam, the nationalist-religious group that sprung into prominence in the late 1950's, carried on the anti-Jewish theme. Malcolm X, defending Muslims against the angry Jewish reaction, said, "The Jew is hypersensitive. I mean you can't even say 'Jew' without him accusing you of anti-Semitism. I don't care what a Jew is professionally—doctor, merchant, housewife, student or whatever—first he or she thinks Jew.

"Now, of course, I can understand the Jew's hypersensitivity. For two thousand years, religious and personal prejudices against Jews have been vented and exercised, as strong as white prejudice against the non-whites. But I know that America's five-and-a-half-million Jews look at it very practically whether they know it or not; that all of the bigotry and hatred focused upon the black man keeps off the Jew a lot of heat that would be on him otherwise."

The success of Jewish Zionism has had a curiously ambivalent and not very salutary effect on Negroes. If the state of Israel stands as a model of what can be accomplished, it also serves as a reminder of painful Negro deficiencies. Jewish achievements seem so beyond the technical ability of the Negro people that they inspire anger and hostility.

Re-enforcing these feelings is the Mohammedan orientation of the Moors, Muslims, Malcolm X and the Marxist orientation of the new generation of black intellectuals. It is the intellectuals who first verbalized the conceit

that the situation of American Negroes can be likened to that of the Indians and Egyptians under the British, the Algerians under the French, the Viet Cong who are currently locked in mortal combat with U.S. military power. To the pantheon of black heroes such as Demark Vesey, Nat Turner, Du Bois, Garvey and the martyred Patrice Lumumba of the Congo, have been added Castro, Mao, Nasser and Ho Chi Minh.

Though there is no hard evidence that Arab or Third World leaders have directly financed Negro Muslims and black power intellectuals, they have wined and dined them royally. In his autobiography, Malcolm X vividly recounts the impression this hospitality made on him. These courtesies were and are enormously gratifying to the starved egos of black leaders and their followers. The social acceptance by world figures has been repaid by an emotional identification with them and their causes: anti-colonialism and anti-Israelism.

An anti-Israel stance in addition has made it possible for Negro intellectuals to rally the masses with blatantly anti-Jewish appeals without having to admit that they are anti-Semitic. In this subtle acceptance of bias, the intellectuals are followers, not leaders, of the masses.

This ideological sleight of hand explains the curious attacks on "Israeli imperialism" by Black Nationalists of all stripes.

One of the most significant aspects of the Black Nationalist movement has been its continuing attempt to break out of the isolation of the American experience. It has sought not only to develop a domestic continuum of history and culture, but to seek strength through an emotional identification with the other non-white peoples of the world. Such an identification was the purpose of Du Bois' Pan-African Conferences and it is the reason for the Cook and Lawson African Unity groups.

A notable sign of the times was the opening in London in the fall of 1967 of the Universal Colored Peoples Asso-

ciation. Its president, Obi Esbuna, a West African student standing beneath a picture of Stokely Carmichael, announced that "the struggle for liberation of the American Negroes is identical with the struggle of oppressed peoples in Asia, Africa and Latin America."

The existence of the emerging nations of Africa have done much to bolster Negro self-image. At last Negroes are able to see black men masters in their own house. The television, newspaper and mass magazine stories about black prime ministers and diplomats make it possible for an increasing number of Negroes to be able to begin to take pride in themselves. The fact that black delegates have power in the United Nations and are known to use their votes against their former colonial masters stiffens the backbone of the emerging Negro middle class.

The 1954 Bandung Conference, which marked the first time that all the so-called colored peoples of the world had ever met, did much to spark a revival in the concept of Pan-Africanism; which, in its more virulent form has been expanded to mean Pan-Colorism. It is this virus combined with a radical economic philosophy that has been incubated by the far-out left Negro militants in SNCC, the RAMS, the MAU MAUs and the Black Panthers.

Black Nationalism like the Zionism that preceded it is an obvious riposte to the problem of identity—a problem created not only by bigotry but by secularism, technology and the population explosion.

The European Enlightenment of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with its intoxication of new ideas, its secular scientific spirit, and its promise of assimilation posed an internal threat to the Jewish community. The chimera of equality offers a similar menace to the twentieth-century Negro.

In Europe the millennial Jewish population actually began to disappear. The temptation to escape medieval orthodoxy was irresistible despite the humiliations that awaited the emancipated Jew in the gentile world. So too

the Negro is tantalized with the vision of being just another middle-class American. The price for escape in both cases is turmoil and anxiety for the individual, his family and the community.

The rapid and unalterable secularization of Europe and its Jews resulted in the degeneration of the pious Jewish home, loss of faith and individual anomie. The disintegration of the old way of life is the great theme of Yiddish literature. Itself the special fruit of secularization, it was a literature that lasted little more than a century chronicling marvelously the forces of dissolution that both created and destroyed it.

The result of offering the elite colored the opportunity to believe that the American creed applies to them has been to strip the larger Negro community bare of leadership at just that time when it is most needed. For the urbanization of the black man—like secularization of the Jew—has eaten into the fabric of his family life, disrupted beyond repair his traditional relationships, and sunk him into individual despair.

Had the Enlightenment fulfilled its promise, the Jews of Europe would have passed peacefully into history. The individual neuroses and guilts created by the abandonment of the faith of their fathers would have been interred with them. The promise was not kept and the state of Israel was created.

America seems even less likely to accept its blacks. The result of this rejection may well be a vastly altered society which reneges on its democratic if not its republican tradition.

Black Nationalism like Jewish Messianism and Zionism is a social phenomenon that results from cultural alienation and social estrangement. The distrust and antagonism created by feelings of total powerlessness are turned not only against the outside world but against existing internal institutions. This explains both the Black Nationalists' rage at the Negro churches and "Uncle Toms" (those

Negroes who have succeeded in the white world either on their own or as professional colored men) and the passionate tirades of Sabbatites and Hasidim against the legalistic rabbis, the privileged Jews outside the walls and the established structure of Jewish ghetto life. Racial redemption was the theme of Zionism just as it is the theme of Black Nationalism. Both Jewish Messianists and Black Nationalists have perceived their cause as a struggle between good and evil.

Unlike Zionists who after 2,000 years of wandering in the wilderness have found their home, the Black Nationalists have only just begun their odyssey.

10

QUESTIONS OF IDENTITY

NEGROES and Jews joined forces not because they had common interests but because they had common enemies. "Prejudice against Negroes and Jews" may be a cliché but it is also a truism. They fought not for one another but against the cruel restraints of a white Anglo-Saxon world. In the nearly eight decades between Joseph Seligman's exclusion from the Grand Union Hotel in Saratoga Springs and the creation of the state of Israel in 1948, American Negroes and Jews endured common social, residential and occupational restrictions. Discrimination against Jews in the United States, of course, never matched in severity that practiced against the Negroes.

To white Christians, Jews and Negroes were not living men but legendary projections—archetypes in a never-ending drama of evil versus good. The Jew was seen as the usurer, the castrater, the bad father, the abuser of intelligence, the icy realist, the cold crafty figure of vengefulness,

the anarchist and the revolutionary. The Negro was perceived as a simple-minded child, as a primitive, a rapist, a brute, a murderer, a symbol of unbridled emotions.

The union between Negroes and Jews was a product of the nightmarish American imagination. It was a negative bond. As a result the partners saw each other only in terms of the exigencies of the alliance. As others dealt with them, so they dealt with each other. As long as the relationship between Negroes and Jews remained formal, distant and political and as long as its major thrust was outward against the white Christian world, the language of stereotypes sufficed.

To protest discrimination in jobs, housing and education, it did not matter if Negro leaders persisted in seeing their Jewish allies as the Biblical children of Israel. Nor did it matter in the fight to end legal segregation that the Jewish establishment tended to conjure up a Negro who was somehow an inferior black Jew endowed with all the ambition and skills but none of the malice of the immigrant of the Lower East Side.

But when real Jews were forced to deal with real Negroes in the jungles of the cities, the language of artificial brotherhood failed completely. When they were forced to talk to each other about rents and credit, about school busing and residential integration, they had no words. Negroes have not yet been able to convey to Jews the impact that the city confrontation has had on them. Nor are Jews willing to admit and understand their own reactions. A true dialogue has yet to begin about the discrete facts of life in the ghetto, wherein Negroes and Jews are free of the racist stereotypes projected by "white Christian" America.

As if the stereotypes imposed on Jews and Negroes from the outside did not offer obstacle enough, both groups have erected barriers of their own devising. They have found it necessary to see themselves as they think others should see them. One outward manifestation of this is the efforts of Negroes and Jews to conform to an idealized

Anglo-Saxon standard of beauty. Fortunes have been made by Negro cosmeticians in the sale of skin whiteners and hair straighteners; and Jews by the thousands have submitted to painful plastic surgery in the hope that the reshaping of the tell-tale Semitic nose would transform their whole persons into ideal "Americans."

These fantasy selves are perpetuated in the Negro press and by the Jewish ethnic establishments. Each group has created a miniature caricature "society" based on their conception of the Anglo-Saxon world. None understood better than Du Bois the inimicableness of this duality: "One ever feels his twoness."

To understand why the alliance has come undone and to predict the consequences of this estrangement, it is necessary to understand that Jews and Negroes have never really dealt with each other but with their respective one-dimensional false fronts. What are the self-perpetuated Negro and Jewish stereotypes? What do they mask? How do Negroes and Jews see themselves and each other? In what situations do Negroes and Jews actually confront each other and how do they relate to one another in these encounters?

In the existential problem of our age—the search for personal identity—Jews and Negroes have had centuries of experience. It is not only in the literature of Proust, Joyce, Mann and Hemingway that the hero creates himself out of the chaos of personal trauma and universal catastrophe. The evolution of the personality, too, is the major theme of such Negro and Jewish writers as Richard Wright, Ralph Ellison, James Baldwin, Abraham Cahan, Saul Bellow and Philip Roth. The questions that plague secularized, atomized man—Who am I? Where do I belong? What is my purpose?—are particularly difficult for Negroes and Jews to answer. Their desperate search for identity—"this longing," as Du Bois said, "to attain self-conscious manhood"—has at its core the discrepancy between the myths and the realities of Negro and Jewish

life—the contrast of the public image as purveyed by official spokesmen and the ethnic press, with the private image as revealed in the literature produced by Negro and Jewish writers.

The Negro press, like the Yiddish press, began as a medium for the expression of the opinions of the intelligentsia. The first Negro paper, *Freedom's Journal,* was established in 1827. Twenty years later, the runaway slave Frederick Douglass began publishing *The North Star.* The major concern of both papers was abolition.

Negro newspapers proliferated after the Civil War. In the 1900's they carried the main brunt of the battle between Booker T. Washington and Du Bois over accommodation versus militancy. In the twenties and thirties, both *The Messenger,* published by A. Philip Randolph, and the NAACP's *Crisis,* edited by Du Bois, strove to inculcate their readers with radical and socialist economic concepts. In this aim and in Du Bois' cultivation of the burgeoning Negro literary talent, the Negro news medium resembled the Yiddish press.

As the Negro papers and magazines gained a mass audience, their tone changed. They abandoned social criticism and crudely boasted about Negro accomplishments inflating them far beyond the real substance. The Yiddish dailies and periodicals, which were never compelled by the circumstances of Jewish life to play the braggart, went into decline just at the time that the Negro press was coming into its own. Jews, unlike Negroes, had been allowed into American life and thus had abandoned their parochialism and found that the majority press catered to their interests.

As the importance of the Yiddish press declined, that of the Negro press grew, because the white press, until the advent of the civil rights movement, was blind to the existence of the black community. Although the white press printed what was "news" to Jews, it ignored what was happening in the Negro community. Because first-genera-

tion city Negroes have always been able to read the majority American press, Negro newspapers cannot do what the Yiddish papers did—simply reprint ordinary news. They must offer their readers a special slant; the reporting of events in the larger world from a Negro point of view. In addition, much space is devoted to happenings in the insulated Negro social world. The result is that the Negro newspaper provides the urban Negro with a romantic escape.

Until very recently, Negro newspapers and magazines glossed lightly over the color issue. *Ebony, Tan, Jet* and *Hue* portrayed a sepia society almost constantly at play. Prominently featured in these pages were cotillion balls, suburban barbecues, the latest styles from Africa and the ubiquitous Cadillac. "Socialites," a favorite term, included Ralph Bunche, a big-city numbers king, Marian Anderson, and leading morticians. Only incidentally and occasionally were the events of racial warfare allowed to interrupt these fanciful romances. Although *Ebony* from time to time did devote space to special pieces on race relations, it reserved the main coverage for spreads about such non-news events as the miscegenous wedded bliss of non-celebrities.

The first to expose the sham of Negro "whiteness" and to discuss the deleterious effect these visions of a Potemkin suburbia had on Negro life was the late and distinguished chairman of Howard University's sociology department, Franklin E. Frazier. In his controversial book *Black Bourgeoisie* (1957), Frazier clearly revealed the pathos of Negroes' desire to receive recognition in what they believed to be white terms.

The Negro press, he noted sardonically, portrays a society at play, not at work, because the Negro image of society is still Southern and aristocratic. Leisure, not accomplishment, gives status. Although the glossy magazines pay lip service to Negro pride, "the fact is that a large part of their revenue comes from companies which produce

products guaranteed to remove Negroid characteristics."

Stripped of its pretentions to present to the world a proper picture of the Negro, the press "actually promulgates the make-believe world of the black bourgeoisie. It will," he continued, "give prominence to any recognition that the Negro receives. It is not concerned with social or economic principles or values except where status is concerned."

Frazier died in 1962, but his analysis of Negro middle-class life-styles is just as pertinent today. Even now the reports of the Negro press on Negro accomplishments can still be described, in his words, as "primarily an attempt to compensate for collective inferiority." More often than not, Frazier—who was among the sociologists who worked on Gunnar Myrdal's classic study of the Negro, *An American Dilemma*—contended, with statistics to back him up, that the accomplishments reported in the black slicks were petty. Negro "multimillionaires" turn out to be black folks living in $40,000 houses.

Income, Frazier observed, superseded color as the criteria of class in the Negro world in the second half of the twentieth century, just as money in the white United States has come to outbid pedigree. Ironically, those Jews whose social values are based on income rarely find themselves in contact with their opposite Negro number. Instead, it is the dedicated Jewish libertarian who is most likely to come into social contact with the upper-class and professional Negro most heavily committed to "the world of society." The result is shock and disillusionment on the Jewish libertarian side. "Why, wonders the Jew," in the words of writer Louis Lomax, "don't the colored stick together and help each other like we do?" The upper-class Negro in his turn resents the moralizing and is bitterly angry when confused with lower-class blacks. He does not want to be viewed, as Ralph Ellison put it, "as an abstract embodiment of living hell."

One of the best publicized examples of this clash be-

tween the doctrinaire Jewish liberal image of the Negro and the upper-class Negro's view of himself was the disagreement between Oklahoma-born, Tuskegee-educated Ellison and the Jewish literary and social critic Irving Howe. This was more than just a literary cause célèbre; it was an enactment of the misunderstanding that exists even between intellectual Negroes and Jews.

In the Autumn 1963 issue of *Dissent,* editor Irving Howe accused Ellison of being "a black boy masquerading," a "false, self-deceived native son." Ellison allegedly provoked this insult because he had, as an author speaking about writers, disclaimed "narrow naturalism" and praised the "diversity, fluidity and magical freedom of American life."

In questioning Ellison's vision of himself, Howe asked, "What, then, was the experience of a man with a black skin, what could it be in this country? How could a Negro put pen to paper, how could he so much as think or breathe, without some impulsion to protest, be it harsh or mild, political or private, released or buried? The sociology of his existence forms a constant pressure . . . a pain and ferocity that nothing could remove."

Ellison retorted, "I could escape the reduction imposed by unjust laws and customs, but not that imposed by ideas which defined me as no more than the sum of those laws and customs . . . The most treacherous assaults," he continued, are "committed by those who regarded themselves as sympathizers."

Howe had demanded of Ellison "clenched militancy"; Ellison had responded by presenting himself as the whole man who savored life. Not content with this rejoinder, he made a sharp observation about Howe and about Jewish intellectuals that lies close to the heart of the Jewish involvement in Negro causes. "Many Negroes, like myself," Ellison wrote, "make a positive distinction between 'whites' and 'Jews.' Not to do so could be either offensive, embarrassing, unjust or even dangerous. If I would know

who I am and preserve who I am, then I must see others distinctly, whether they see me or not. Thus I feel uncomfortable whenever I discover Jewish intellectuals writing as though they were guilty of enslaving my grandparents, or as though the Jews were responsible for the system of segregation. Not only do they have troubles of their own, as the saying goes, but Negroes know this only too well." Calling his critics the "new apologists for segregation with the highest motives," he continued, "the real guilt of such Jewish intellectuals lies in their facile, perhaps unconscious, but certainly unrealistic identification with what is called the power structure."

Ellison's criticism is interesting and self-revealing. His assumption that Jews in their over-eagerness to be WASPs are trying to assume the white man's burden speaks more of Negro projections than Jewish reality. For the *mea culpa* is not, as Ellison would hear it, a password but a genuine confession of an ever-present sense of Jewish guilt.

This feeling of uneasiness finds expression in Jewish political attitudes and social values. It is the central theme of the literature produced by American Jews. The heroes or anti-heroes of these tales are the tall, often blond, Americanized sons and grandsons of immigrant Jews, who can find no sense or meaning in Old World rituals and are repelled by the air-conditioned modern Jewish establishment. They want no part of the United Jewish Appeal. They can't read Max Lerner. They have no feeling of identity with the silk-suited, cigar-smoking, Miami-tanned leader of advanced gifts in the salami industry, and they are sexually repelled by the "nice Jewish girl" who will grow up and join the Hadassah sisterhood. Yet they want somehow to be Jews. They do not want to turn their backs on their long history, and they cannot turn their backs on the six million who died in Hitler's crematoriums.

They do know that Jews are supposed to suffer: this is their heritage, a two-thousand-year empathy with the out-

cast and the unwanted. For even in the split-level suburban homes of their fathers, this ghetto-born sense of anxiety has managed to transmit itself. Even in America the ironic knowledge remains that "a Jew's joy is not without fright." Looking around for the cloak of misery to cover the shameful ostentatiousness of the clothes of his accidental good fortune, the Jew's eye lights upon the Negro: there, he says to himself, but for the grace of that God I no longer believe in, go I.

And so, as the WASP used the Jew so the Jew uses the Negro as a symbol of his own lost misery. This empathy with the wretched of the earth, this transference of sorrow, this unease at a certain comfort, all translate themselves into feelings of guilt and obligation which have led to the close identification of many Jews with the Negro. For the Jew, the black man has become a kind of stand-in for himself.

This inability to feel comfortably American and comfortably rich is best summed up by the late Abraham Cahan, the former editor of the *Jewish Daily Forward,* in his novel *The Rise and Fall of David Levinsky.* Says Levinsky, "Sometimes when I think of my past . . . the metamorphosis I have gone through strikes me as nothing short of a miracle. I was born and reared in the lowest depths of poverty and I arrived in America . . . with four cents in my pocket. I am now worth more than two million dollars . . . and yet . . . my inner identity . . . impresses me as being precisely the same as it was thirty or forty years ago. My present station, power, the amount of worldly happiness at my command and the rest of it seem to be devoid of significance."

Levinsky was constantly and continually dissatisfied. He yearned for fulfillment, for reconciliation. He yearned for the lost, thorny, weed-strewn Eden of his youth, which was marked by hunger and poverty. This lamentation for an unrealized and unrealizable life is at the core of whatever remains of Jewish culture. In exile it was a

crying out for Eretz Israel, in religion it was a dream of a Messiah. In America, in a time when Eretz Israel exists but is not wanted, it is a nostalgia for past suffering and a feeling that only by identifying with present suffering can a Jew remain a Jew.

Yiddish literature, which was an expression of the life that molded Jewish immigrant families, concerned itself with "the virtue of powerlessness and the powers of helplessness, the company of the dispossessed, the sanctity of the insulted and the injured." Saul Bellow, the American novelist who casts Jews in the role of archetypal Americans and who is himself the son of an immigrant tailor, summed up his father's heritage. "The Jews of the ghetto," he wrote, "found themselves involved in an immense joke. They were divinely designated to be great, yet they were mice."

It was the feeling of inward greatness and the recognition of outward weakness that formed the emotional and moral framework of the ghetto Jews. Adrift in a world that scorns tradition, idolizes newness and has made a fetish of progress, identity has become for the majority of American Jews a stereotyped membership in a Protestantized synagogue. For the minority, those that Du Bois might have dubbed "the talented tenth," it has become a longing for a lost radicalism, a homesickness for a past era of wretchedness—a fantasy that the black brother is indeed one's self.

This fantasy got Howe into trouble with Ellison and leaves ordinary Jews open-mouthed with horror at the increasing anti-Semitism of the black power left. It is this peculiar distorted self-image of the American Jew, who thinks of himself as one of the world's dispossessed while living in a suburban house in Great Neck and driving a Thunderbird, that Ellison did not understand. In fact he felt insulted by it.

Howe in his turn was ignorant of the long history of Negro fantasy life and the psychic necessity for it. What

was worse, he was intolerant of the efforts of Negroes like Ellison to look at themselves as whole men rather than as extensions of their pigmentation. The emotions aroused in Negroes by Negro-ness and in Jews by Jewishness are as opposite as each group's experiences in the United States. Jews feel guilt, while Negroes endure shame.

Although the Negro's experience in slavery has been compared with the Jew's in the concentration camp, a more meaningful comparison is the parallel but very different history of the Negroes in the hundred years after emancipation and the Jews' millennial existence as outcasts in Europe. In both instances these pariah people were a part of, and apart from, the land in which they lived. Jews were in Europe before many of the Europeans. They came to France, Spain, Germany, Rumania and England with the Roman legions and remained behind when the barbarians overran the Roman settlements. So, too, the first Negroes were brought on the *Good Ship Jesus* to the colonies in 1619 and have been present on this continent and part of its history since that time.

The Jews, however, saw themselves as God's chosen people, superior to those who surrounded them. In fact, no matter how poor or persecuted their existence, they always lived better than the masses of serfs and peasants around them. The stereotype about Jews, though unflattering and dangerous to the point of genocide, was never degrading. And the Jews never believed the paranoid myth that they were part of an all-powerful conspiracy to overthrow the world. Their everyday experience contradicted it; a Jew did not look in the mirror and see Fagin.

The Negro stereotype, on the other hand, is debasing and degrading. Negroes seem to believe it because it bears a certain resemblance to the facts of their daily lives. Over and over again Negro writers testify to their feelings of inferiority and shame. James Baldwin, for example, wrote of his father: "He had a terrible life. He was defeated

long before he died because he believed at the bottom of his heart what the white people said about him."

The screen image of Negroes also made an eradicable impression on black children. The harsh reality is that 350 years of slavery and white oppression have distorted the Negro personality and created the Nigger and the Sambo, the Mammy and high-steppin' high yaller. Until the Negro is able to destroy this image in his own mind, he will remain in thrall.

Among the Negro middle and upper classes this self-hate has led to a flight from reality that is expressed in the slicks as the tan man. In the lower classes, self-hate has produced rage, fear of the results of this rage, despair and apathy. To poor Negroes, the actual environment is a punishment for existence. Hurt, he wants to strike back, and in the ghetto riots and violence, and in the anti-honky rhetoric of the new militants, he has found a way.

Mississippi-born author Richard Wright, best known for his illumination of the black lower depths, wrote of this murderous and self-destructive anger. Wright himself came from this underworld. His father had deserted his mother when he was a small boy, he had known intense hunger, he was a drunkard in his teens, and he had witnessed the lynching of his uncle. "In the main," he said, "we are different from other folks, in that when an impulse moves us, when we are caught in the throes of inspiration, when we are moved to better our lot, we do not ask ourselves: can we do it? but will they let us? If you act at all, it is either to flee or to kill, you are either victim or a rebel. And almost all were victims.

"I used to mull over," he continued, "the absence of real kindness in Negroes, how unstable was our tenderness, how lacking in genuine passion we were, how void of great hope, how timid our joy, how few our traditions, how hollow our memories, how lacking we were in those intangible sentiments that bind man to man and how shallow was even our despair . . . What has been taken for

emotional strength was our negative confusions, our flights, our fears, our frenzy under pressure . . . I knew that Negroes had never been allowed to catch the full spirit of Western civilization, that they lived somehow in it but not of it."

Claude Brown, writing a generation later about growing up black in Harlem, spoke of the same degradation of color and of the need for black men to act out the role of "bad nigger" assigned them both by whites and their own folklore. This role consisted of wild "Saturday night" behavior—drinking, whoring and fighting. It is only very recently that Negroes have been able to view blackness positively, and the writers who have are revolutionaries and social activists, such as Rap Brown, Julius Lester and Eldridge Cleaver.

Negroes like Ellison desperately want to be part of the only civilization they know. Ellison, whose life has encompassed much suffering and pain, as well as triumph, is infuriated by the Jewish liberal stereotype who sees not the man but the symbol, and who characterizes the only black life worthy of examination as "piss in the hall and blood on the steps."

"Watch out there, Jack," he calls out, "there are people living here."

Yet Ellison, too, is trapped by the overwhelming experience of blackness. He admitted as much when he said, "Negro lives have been determined by outside norms, seldom in terms of our own sense of value gained from our unique American experience. Negro creative energy," he explained, "goes into denying the stereotype without a corresponding commitment to the development of inner Negro life." Confined within the cage of color, he can see no decent motivation that would lead a white man to empathize with a black one. Jews, to Ellison and other Negroes, are white men and no amount of picketing for black causes will make them darker. Ellison believes the Jew is using the Negro "as the receptacle for . . .

self-disgust, for convenience, a counter in a banal game."

Thus, while Negroes misinterpret Jewish empathy, Jews are bewildered by the growing Negro hostility. Why, the Jew constantly asks, should the Negro hate me? The Negro, annoyed by the question, is convinced that it is the Jew's dodge to escape his responsibility for dominating ghetto life. The Negro cannot believe that all Jews do not know that to poor blacks they are the Man: the shopkeeper, the landlord, the constable, the pawnbroker, the moneylender.

It is this Jewish presence that acts increasingly as a reminder of Negro inadequacies. In a world shaped by shame and anger, knowing that sepia society is an illusion and finding the black life unbearable, the Negro is constantly in search of himself. Unlike the Jew, he is completely cut off from his past—slavery stripped him of his history. Du Bois wrote, "There is nothing so indigenous, so completely made in America as we." Yet, because of the rejection by white America, every Negro must ask, Who am I? Because of this distaste, there remains with the Negro a doubt of his own worth, a constant reflection of an unpleasant image. The Negro thus begins to wonder if he really exists at all. Social ostracism denies the Negro's existence and creates the problem of facelessness. In the words of James Baldwin, "Nobody knows my name." It is not just that the white man does not know the Negro's name; the Negro does not know it either. The Negro American has never been able to decide what to call himself—Afro-American, colored, black, Negro, Asiatic, Moor or Muslim. The Black Muslims have gone so far as to require their followers to drop their family names, which were derived in the main from former white slave owners, and use the letter X, the symbol of the unknown. The confusion and controversy over name is bound up with the most fundamental questions of identity; flight from blackness, self-hatred, and the association of black with evil, corruption and despair.

The Negro, said Elijah Muhammad, the spiritual leader of the Black Muslims, "wants to be everything but himself. He wants to be a white man. He processes his hair. Acts like a white man. He wants to integrate with the white man, but he cannot integrate with himself or his own kind. The Negro wants to lose his identity because he does not know his own identity."

James Baldwin, who foretold of widespread black anger, tells a pitiful tale of how he struggled to avoid in his own being anything that might smack of the Negro stereotype. Resolutely he refused to eat watermelon or listen to jazz. Writing of those days he said, "There was not, no matter where one turned, any acceptable image of oneself, no proof of one's existence. One had the choice of 'acting just like a nigger' or of 'not acting just like a nigger'—and only those who have tried it know how impossible it is to tell the difference."

Elucidating this theme in his novel *Invisible Man,* Ralph Ellison proclaimed, "I am an invisible man. No, I am not a spook like those who haunted Edgar Allan Poe; nor am I one of your Hollywood-movie ectoplasms. I am a man of substance, of flesh and bone fiber and liquids—and I might even be said to possess a mind. I am invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to see me . . . When they approach me they see only my surroundings, themselves or figments of their imagination, indeed everything and anything except me . . . let me confess . . . you ache with the need to convince yourself that you do exist in the real world, that you're a part of all the sound and anguish, and you strike out with your fists, you curse and you swear to make them recognize you. And alas, it's seldom successful."

While Ellison explained the need for the Negro mask, it was Richard Wright who first portrayed the true face of the man behind the mask. The mind and soul of the *unter-menschen* hero of the black ghetto were revealed in Bigger Thomas, the Chicago black boy, rapist and mur-

derer. It was he who made understandable the thousands of Bigger Thomases in the black cities of America.

Nowhere can the difference between Jewish and Negro attitudes be seen more strikingly than in the contrasts between their folk music. Jewish folk music concerns itself with joy and an ersatz *Gemütlichkeit,* the blues are a poetic confrontation with reality. Unlike the Jewish songs which seek to solidify family and community and seal them off from the menacing, barbarian outside world, blues and jazz are personal responses to disaster and white injustice.

Negroes sing of desolation and desertion; Jews, of family life. It is inconceivable that a Jewish song could be entitled "No Mo' Home than a Dawg" or that a Negro refrain could be "So in a poor little home, reigns happiness and joy."

While Leadbelly, the ex-convict guitarist who in his prime picked a thousand pounds of cotton a day, sang:

> He's doin' all he can
> Oh Baby, still he's traveling
> Through the land.

A Jewish cantor could sing of the East European ghetto of half a century ago:

> In a poor little home toward evening at the fireplace
> A loving mother weaves there for her child her hopes and dreams.

Of fathers, Leadbelly lamented:

> When I was a li'l boy, Li'l boy, Li'l boy
> When I was a li'l boy twelve years old
> Papa went and left me, left me, left me
> Papa went and left me, so I was told.

While a Jewish child once sang:

> Clap and clap your little hands
> My jewel, my sweet son
> Daddy will buy a pair of shoes
> For my beloved one.

Folk songs reveal the values of the people who sing them. Negro songs glorify drugs, drinking and sexual prowess, while Jewish folk music sentimentalizes mothers and speaks reverently of learning. A wide chasm separates the people who cry out, "My moder's dead, my fader's 'crost de sea. Ain't got nobody to feel an' care for me," from those who sing, "Listen closely children, Remember dear ones, What you are learning here, say it once again and then repeat again, *Komets Alef o*."

Humor, too, divulges a people's self-image. By indirection the joke indicates the values of the group that invented it. The joke also serves as a safe expression of those emotions that have been most carefully repressed. Since Jews value things of the mind and Negroes elevate physical prowess, there is not even in humor much that they share, with the exception that both see themselves as victim of the Anglo-Saxon world.

To foil his enemy, the Negro employs the dodge of stupidity. His adversary never knows that the Negro considers him an enemy or that he has been deliberately foiled. To wit, the joke about the Negro maid in Montgomery, Alabama, during the bus strike: when asked her opinion of the boycott by her white mistress, she replied, "Oh, I wouldn't have anything to do with all that trouble. I'm going to walk until it's all over."

In the Jewish joke, the tormentor sets out deliberately to taunt the Jew. When the joke is over, the bully knows he's had it. Brute strength being low on the list of Galuth values, the Jew can agree to a fight with impunity and then add, "By the way, if I'm not there on time you can start without me."

The Jewish joke deflates Jewish pretensions and reveals Jewish intelligence. Negro humor unmasks white hypocrisy and allows the safe expression of anger. Dick Gregory's opening line to an enthusiastic white, largely Jewish night-club audience used to be, "I'm glad you like me so much, I just bought a house in your neighborhood."

Obviously, when Negroes and Jews meet in any situations other than the political rally, the civic function or the civil rights meeting, all of which are heavily overcast with the pall of brotherhood, they are in for a rude shock. On those pat occasions, which since the emergence of black ghetto militance have greatly diminished in number, the earnest Negro leader looks to the Jewish leader to gauge his reaction and to agree with him. Here he "acts the nigger," as James Baldwin said or "lies because that is the way to get along with white men," as Ralph Ellison had his educator, Bledsoe, explain in *Invisible Man.*

These surface masks of agreement allowed the Jew to project onto the Negro Jewish values and left him completely unprepared for the street demagogue's appeal to the lower-class black man "to get the dirty Jew." The Negro, who subconsciously might still carry the memory of spirituals in which the children of Israel suffered shame and humiliation and who might have some dim knowledge that Jews like Negroes have been murdered just because they existed, finds the black-ghetto Jewish businessman a bitter disillusionment.

As one poor Negro tenant said about his Jewish landlord, "That cat never does stop talkin' about all the bread he gives to charity, but he never done fixed the roof that leaks or the toilet that won't flush."

What the polite Negro cannot admit, and the white liberal will not admit, is that a fulminating hatred, not a clenched militancy, has corroded the lives of black Americans. "To be a Negro," said James Baldwin, "in this country and to be relatively conscious, is to be in a rage almost all of the time." The lower-class Negro tradition of

Saturday-night violence in which Negroes stab and slash and shoot each other is one expression of this nihilistic fury. Another is the murderous anger directed against isolated whites. In this frenzy the friendly Irish cop is not to be distinguished from the cop who pummels the one-eyed diabetic boy into unconsciousness because the boy asked the reason for his arrest. In this crazed anger the Jewish civil libertarian is not distinguishable from the Jewish shopkeeper who weighs his thumb along with the discolored low-grade meat. The Italian constable, who evicts the aged Negro couple from their tenament and puts them out on the sidewalk, obliterates the young whites in another part of town who would like to do the right thing.

The young black possessed by rage, stomping on the old Jewish merchant, smashing his glasses and calling him a "mother fucker," is getting back at the white world. To the old Jew, this crazed creature is not a victim but a tormentor, a persecutor, a dark reincarnation of the Cossack and Polish pogromchik. The difference is that this time the law and the force of society are on the old Jew's side. For in the end, he is a white man, and that's what counts in America.

11

WHITE HIPSTERS AND BLACK JEWS

LARGE numbers of Jews and Negroes are in a desperate search for personal identity. They seek to find some ecological niche in the featureless, chrome-lit American wilderness. None better illustrate, albeit in exaggerated form, this preoccupation than writer Norman Mailer and entertainer Sammy Davis, Jr., both of whom have attempted to "find themselves" by playing reverse roles.

In what might have seemed a parody of the national mania for creating stereotypes, Mailer and Davis in the years before the emergence of the black militant and the resultant racial polarization seized upon each other's negative group image, polished it up in their imagination, and donned it in the belief it was an impregnable suit of armor.

Davis, who the scandal-mongering tabloids dubbed a "super-spade" and a "lover of white beauties" became a convert to Judaism. Mailer, the erstwhile nice Jewish boy

from Brooklyn, declared himself to be a black stud. An examination of these bizarre examples of a Negro who sought security and power in Jewishness and a Jew who sought masculinity in a fantasy of negritude reveals many of the unspoken emotional assumptions that more conformist Jews and Negroes still have about each other.

C. Wright Mills once explained the difference between a personal difficulty and a social problem. A social problem exists, he maintained, when a large number of people have the same personal difficulty. By this definition the sexual embarrassments of Norman Mailer and a whole generation of intellectual Jews and the desperate needs of Sammy Davis, Jr., and the many upwardly mobile lower-class Negroes to conquer their sense of powerlessness represent major, if unmentionable, social dilemmas in Jewish and Negro communities.

Jews, however, are not alone in their sexual conflicts. Sociologist Calvin C. Hernton noted that "interracial sex occupies a significant portion of the fantasy life and frequently actual life of Negroes and whites of both sexes on both sides of the Mason-Dixon line." Our nation's attitude toward sex is, in fact, schizophrenic, for sex represents to us both the culmination of love and tenderness, and a dirty and degraded act. The emphasis of the mass media on titillation as opposed to sexual fulfillment, on sadism as a component of sensuality, and on violence as a means of orgiastic gratification, has its roots in our repressive Puritan tradition. As a result, sex is as often an expression of aggression and retaliation as it is of affection. In relations between the races, sex is a weapon.

Out of these confusions of sex and race, and out of the history of white male sexual exploitation of black women, has come a racial-sexual mythology. It is a mythology that exerts a fearsome and distorting influence on almost all American life. In this dark fantasy the black man is the sexual animal par excellence. He is the infinitely virile black stud, the rapist and the creator of unutterable joys.

Implicit in this phobic vision is the fear that the white woman is irresistibly drawn to the Negro male. To avoid this dreaded state of white female degradation, barriers were erected; no intimidation was too great, no action too vile, if done "to defend the honor of white womanhood." The fear of the Negro as a sexual competitor is the classic cause of lynching and castration. It has produced both a black and white sexual paranoia. It is this fear based on guilt that prompts that peculiar rejoinder to pleas for simple justice—"Yes, but would you want your daughter to marry one?"

The myth of Negro potency and virility holds a special fascination for the male Jewish intellectual. It is a fascination perhaps not different, but certainly deviant in expression, from that held by other white men. The Jewish intellectuals extol and/or pursue interracial sex with an intensity peculiar to them. It is the Jewish intellectual, living in mortal terror of being affixed by that all-American word of opprobrium—*sissy*—that most strongly champions the cult of the Negro primitive. Norman Mailer, before he was personally subjected to the calculated rudeness of the militants and turned to acting out political rather than sexual fantasies (he wrote about his reaction to the militants and his changing obsessions in *Miami and The Siege of Chicago*), was the high priest of this hip theology. In his essay *The White Hipster,* Mailer wrote:

> Knowing in the cells of his existence that life was war, nothing but war, the Negro . . . could rarely afford the sophisticated inhibitions of civilization and so he kept for his survival the art of the primitive, he lived in the enormous present, he subsisted for his Saturday night kicks, relinquishing the pleasures of the mind for the more obligatory pleasures of the body. Hated from outside and therefore, hating himself, the Negro was forced into the position of exploring all moral wildernesses of civilized life . . . the Negro chose to move in that other direction where all situations are equally valid and in

> the worst of perversion, promiscuity, pimpery, drug addiction, rape, razor-slash, bottle break, what have you, the Negro discovered and elaborated a morality of the bottom.

Having established this Pop Under-Man, who set out deliberately to live the life of hip, Mailer romanticized and identified with him, classifying himself among the "urban adventurers who drifted out at night looking for action with a black man's code to fit their facts. The hipsters," according to Mailer, "had absorbed the existentialist synapses of the Negro and for practical purposes could be considered a White Negro."

Mailer hints that he mounted a black charger and whipped out his penis in lieu of a spear, not to liberate willing Rapunzels from their castlekeeps of sexual repression, but to ward off the dread plague of a "puny orgasm." In an account of an evening spent with a gang of thugs on the New York subway, Mailer linked violence to sexuality and derived from his experience a code of masculinity. Implicit in this is the idea that the attainment of masculinity can be justified by brutal means. That is, if in the quest a few old Jewish shopkeepers or other weak nondenomination whites get cuffed about the pate or worse, at least the cleansing nature of the street violence has lifted them above their bourgeois life into martyrdom.

Mailer was not the first writer to confuse instability and criminality with sexual vitality. The Negro intelligentsia in the 1920's adopted just such a view. This second generation of the black middle class struck this stance in defiance of their fathers' avowed gentility. The writers, poets, musicians and political activists of the Harlem Renaissance held that their parents' complaisance was bred out of fear and a desire to emulate Booker T. Washington.

Hitching onto the 1920's avant-garde vogue of Freudianism, which held instinct to be superior to intellect, id to superego, they found in the "black masses" a simple

culture to glamorize. Noting the worldwide acceptance of jazz, these Negro intellectuals, in an attempt to find self-acceptance, deified black low-life. They found in the life stories of barroom pianists, careless nomadic laborers, street-corner idlers, strumpets and outcasts, a set of values. In repudiating the essentially assimilationist views of middle-class Negroes, these "new Negroes" laid the intellectual foundations for the black nationalism of the 1960's.

James Baldwin challenged not only Mailer's new-found black masculinity but the whole demonology of male Negro sexuality. Unlike the Harlem literati or Mailer, Baldwin, who was raised in Harlem, the son of a New Orleans-born laborer turned New York storefront preacher, knows the terrors of black low-life from first-hand experience. A close friend of Mailer's, he found it impossible to take his fellow writer's pretensions seriously. "Norman," he wrote, "is very dear to me . . . but . . . not for an instant" did Baldwin "consider him hip"; rather Mailer is classified as "a real sweet ofay cat, but a little frantic.

"I could not," he continued, "with the best will in the world, make any sense out of *The White Negro*." Then Baldwin struck at the heart of Mailer's matter, "glorification of the orgasm was but a way of avoiding all the terrors of life and love." Baldwin viewed the hip mystique as "a total rejection of life." It is, he believes, "the fulfillment of an infantile dream of love . . . extended into violence. Why," he asked his friend, "malign the sorely menaced sexuality of Negroes in order to justify the white man's sexual panic?"

Baldwin attempted to answer his own question:

> I think I know something about his [Mailer's] journey from my own black boy point of view because my own journey is not really so very different . . . I think I know something about American masculinity which most men of my generation do not know because they have

> not been menaced by it in the way that I have been. It is still true, alas, that to be an American Negro male is also to be a kind of walking phallic symbol: which means one pays in one's own personality, for the sexual insecurity of others. . . . The great gap between Norman's state and mine had a terrible effect on our relationship, for it inevitably connected, not to say collided, with that myth of the sexuality of Negroes which Norman, like so many others, refused to give up.

Almost with a shrug of his thin shoulders, he added, "How could I play, in any way whatever, the noble savage?"

The reality of Negro sexuality that Mailer was so desperate to emulate, and Baldwin so quick to disparage, is illuminated by the experiences of Sea Cat, a twenty-seven-year-old Negro street-corner idler. Born and raised in the all-black Second Precinct of Washington, D.C.'s inner city, he quit high school in tenth grade. Married at twenty, he has long been separated from his wife and children. A born raconteur, Sea Cat is a dark-complexioned man of average height who processes his long thick hair and has an easy, racy style of speech. He, like his friends, is eager to present himself as an exploiter of women.

"Pussy," according to Sea Cat's code, which was recorded by Elliot Liebow in his remarkable book *Tally's Corner,* is something that "a man should take what he can get, when he can get it." In Sea Cat's world, women, who are usually the steady breadwinners, are also looked to for financial and material support. To cover up this dependence and reversal of roles, Sea Cat, at least in his conversation, attempts to deny any feelings of intimacy or affection. The truth is that the relationships between the hip Sea Cat and his women are often a confused mixture of exploitation and affection, with Sea Cat the loser.

Sea Cat met Gloria, a short, stocky twenty-five-year-old widow, at an amusement park in Maryland. Gloria was the beneficiary of her husband's life insurance, and she also inherited a half-interest in a profitable business. She

owned two cars and a beach house. Two weeks after they met, she gave Sea Cat the use of her convertible. By the end of the year he had moved into an apartment that she had rented and furnished for him. All seemed well for the next few months. Then Sea Cat was upset. "I had it made but I blew it. I blew it. I really loved that woman. She gave me everything she had. Not the money. I don't mean that. She used to say that when a woman gave a man her body she was giving him everything a woman had to give. I really loved her, and she loved me too." Despite Sea Cat's sorrow and his recognition of the part he played in the breakup, he found it impossible to apologize. When he went to see Gloria in an attempt to renew their affair, he hit her.

Commenting on the prevalence of relationships like Sea Cat's and Gloria's, Abram Kardiner and Lionel Oversey wrote in *The Mark of Oppression,* "The Negro is hardly the abandoned hedonist he is supposed to be. Quite the contrary, sex, it often seems, is relatively unimportant to him. The factors that weigh heavily to make this case are the uniformly bad relations with females." Kardiner and Oversey point out that a majority of lower-class Negro men come from female-dominated households. Their relationships with their mothers are fraught not with affection but dependent hostility. They are witnesses to the contempt with which their mothers, the steady earners, treat their fathers and all men. "Masculinity," the authors point out, "is tied with power. The male is much more vulnerable to socio-economic failure."

Kenneth Clark, the noted Negro psychiatrist, added, "In American life, sex is, like business advancement, a prime criterion of success and hence of personal worth. It is in sexual behavior that the damage to Negro adults shows up in especially poignant and tragic clarity . . . the lower-class Negro male, rejected at home, becomes a vagrant or a tom cat or he sits home alone, impotent physically and socially . . . It has long been an inside

bit of humor among Negroes to say that Negro men should bribe their wives to silence."

Of such facts were the dreams of a Norman Mailer made. The vagrant Negro's inability to act rationally or in his own self-interest, his failure to respond appropriately, his constant search for security and affection, are seen not as maladjusted responses to a pathological life but as defiant choices of an existential man. In reading a code of valor into a set of random acts, Mailer was apparently trying to set himself free from the very different kind of bondage that imprisons the American Jewish intellectual.

Mailer refuses to recognize Sea Cat's sorrow and bewilderment. He sees only Sea Cat's hostility to women and his seeming ability to use, punish and humiliate them without guilt. This extolling of brutality, however, is really only a reaction to the fear of female domination. For Jewish women, like Negro women, are the commanding figures in the family constellation. While Sea Cat was rejected by this all-powerful personage, Mailer was a victim of overprotection and manipulation. Mailer's earlier writings strongly express this mortal combat with that protean figure—the Jewish mother. He envies Sea Cat his cool hostility and alienation. He yearns to hate without guilt. Thus, under the cover of blackness, he fantasizes a guiltless violence.

Fortunately the black violence that Mailer so admires is no more real than the Negro sexuality he envies. Negro ferocity is not a product of derring-do but of inhibition. As Alvin Poussaint, noted Negro psychiatrist, explained:

> Last year as I was leaving my office in Jackson, Mississippi, with my Negro secretary, a white policeman yelled, "Hey boy! Come here!" . . . I retorted, "I'm no boy!" . . .
>
> "What d'ya say, boy . . . What's your name, boy?"
>
> Frightened, I replied, "Dr. Poussaint, I'm a physician" . . .
>
> He hissed, "What's your first name, boy?" . . .

I muttered in profound humiliation, "Alvin" . . .
My manhood had been ripped from me—and in the presence of a Negro woman for whom I, a "man," was supposed to be a protector . . .

Yet, Poussaint wondered, "What crippling price would I have paid for a few moments of assertive manhood? What was I to do with my rage?"

Traditionally, in lower-class Negroes, that anger is vented in a Saturday night of drunken sexual and physical violence. It is this night of bloodletting, brutality and sex that outsider Mailer romantically extolls.

Harlem-born Claude Brown has a more rational and compassionate explanation. "There is," he explains, "a Saturday night in every Negro community":

> . . . The bars will jump. The precinct station will have a busy night. The hospital's emergency ward will jump. Cats who have been working all their lives, who've never been in any trouble before . . . they'll all come out . . .
>
> It's usually the older folks who practice this Saturday night thing, or some of the younger cats who haven't come out of the woods yet, young cats who drink a lot of liquor, who didn't quite finish junior high school, who still have most of the southern ways . . . the young cats who want to be bad niggers. It's usually guys around 18 to 25, guys who haven't separated themselves from the older generation . . . They follow . . . the Saturday night pattern of getting drunk, getting a new piece of cunt, and getting real bad . . .
>
> To me . . . Saturday night was down home night . . . everything violent happened on Saturday night . . . Everybody just seemed to let out all their hostility on everybody else . . . If a person was lucky enough to get his throat cut, he'd be free from the fields . . . if someone was lucky enough to cut somebody else's throat, he'd done the guy a favor, because he'd freed him.
>
> Maybe they wanted to die on Saturday night. They'd always associated Sunday with going to heaven because that was when they went to Church and sang all those

songs, clapped and shouted and stomped their feet and praised the Lord.

Seymour Krim, who in the 1950's was one of a group of Jewish intellectuals associated with *Commentary* magazine, accepted the truth of Claude Brown's description of a Harlem Saturday night. Nonetheless, he found it impossible to relinquish the myth of Negro sexuality. Unlike Mailer, he did not cast himself in the role of Sea Cat. Rather he sought surcease by accepting the legend of the infinite sexual receptivity of black women.

Krim, who was born in Jewish middle-class Washington Heights in 1922, recalls, in his book, *Views of a Near-Sighted Cannoneer,* "the Negro came into my life with a wallop directly connected with the sex drive, when I was 15. It should be no secret," he revealed, "that until the War [World War II] the colored girl was the great underground sex symbol for the U. S. white man, the recipient of his trembling mixture of guilt, leer, and sadistic male drive."

Krim then made a confession which goes a long way in explaining the prevalence of in-Jewish jokes about impotent sons and domineering mothers. "I had never been able to make it with the pretty, aggressive Jewish girls." He masturbated instead to a fantasy of a super-sexed black Jazz Queen.

Krim was in his twenties when he had his first affair with a Negro girl. It was a typical Greenwich Village relationship, by Krim's account, between a neurotic black girl trying to be white and a tremulous Jewish boy who wished he were black. Krim, who had been orphaned when he was twelve, was so unsure of himself and his own personal identity that he had his nose bobbed and whipped off his glasses whenever he went out in pursuit of sex.

Ultimately he found Harlem and Negro prostitutes. This scene made him feel alive and manly for the first

time in his life. In Harlem, Krim found he could disguise himself, cover up what he believed to be his sissy intellectual self. "When I did my up-town balling," he commented, I looked "like a man . . . dressed as rifle hard and classy." Krim found that he could earn "good looks" (by which he meant masculinity), by dressing sharply, wearing zoot suits and talking tough. He viewed sex as if it were an anonymous business. Far from the scene of familial emotion, this intellectual Jew was able to abandon himself at last. "For the first time in my adult life, I felt completely confident and masterful . . . because society judged me superior."

Tormented by the distortions that race mythology has inflicted upon such friends as Mailer and Krim, James Baldwin has sought in his fiction to discover "another country" where the humanity of the individual can be considered without reference to the false social strictures of race. To add resonance to his contention that the search for love and self-fulfillment are the ultimate realities, Baldwin identifies the problems of homosexual love with those of interracial love. Declaring the words "white" and "Negro," "heterosexual" and "homosexual" to be without moral meaning, he fuses sex crossings with color crossings and declares the sole criterion of human relationships to be their internal emotional content. That which interferes with the pursuit of love in any of its manifold forms is evil to Baldwin.

In his novel *Another Country,* Baldwin relentlessly carried the word "integration" to its ultimate conclusion. It is not, he realizes, a simple term. Seeing beyond the superficiality of legal equality and equal opportunity, Baldwin attempted to postulate a world where color carried no special emotional charge. Baldwin acknowledges that integration on a deeper level implies not separate and equal but homogenized and indistinguishable.

Baldwin stated his mission simply, and the mission of Mailer and Krim. "If we, and . . . I mean the relatively

conscious whites and the relatively conscious blacks, who must like lovers insist on, or create the consciousness of the other, do not falter in our duty now, we may be able, handful that we are, to end the racial nightmare, and achieve our country, and change the history of the world."

To most Americans, this dream of a café au lait society is a nightmare. Yet Baldwin is not alone in viewing miscegenation as the final solution to the race problem. To a great extent the only whites who would erase all trace of caste by obliterating the features of race are Jews.

Claude Brown commented on this phenomenon on its simplest level when he recorded a passage of dialogue between his white Jewish girl friend, Judy, and himself. Explaining her willingness to go out with him, she said, "Oh, my folks are broadminded. We're Jewish you know."

Later, Judy asked Claude, "Why did you that time, when I told you I was Jewish . . . did you say you suspected it?"

Claude replied, "I don't know exactly why or what it is, Judy, but there seems to be a strong attraction between Jewish people and Negroes. Most of the white girls you see going around with colored fellows will be Jewish. And most of the white guys you see going with colored girls will be Jewish."

Among interracial marriages, Jews figure prominently as the white partners. These marriages are most frequently among the best-educated whites and Negroes. They are often the end result of a college romance. A complex of reasons makes Jews more likely than other whites to marry Negroes. Jews seek higher education in greater numbers than other groups. They are more inclined to be intellectual and committed to civil rights. They are frequently in rebellion against stifling familial bonds. Breaking the taboo against marriage with an outsider is a tempting form of revolt. A Negro partner represents extreme defiance. In addition, Jews suffer from feelings of generalized guilt, which tends to make them identify with Ne-

groes, and they have feelings of physical inferiority that are lessened by associating with Negroes.

Norman Podhoretz, the stocky, tough-minded editor of *Commentary,* wrote in a controversial piece called "My Negro Problem and Ours":

> It is wrong for a man to suffer because of the color of his skin. Besides that clichéd proposition of liberal thought, what argument can stand and be respected? If the arguments are the arguments of feeling, they must be made to yield; and one's own soul is not the worst place to begin working a huge social reformation. Not so long ago, it used to be asked of white liberals, "Would you like your sister to marry one?" When I was a boy and my sister was still unmarried, I would certainly have said no to that question. But now I am a man, my sister is already married, and I have daughters. If I were to be asked today whether I would like a daughter of mine "to marry one," I would have to answer: "No, I wouldn't like it at all." I would rail and rave and rant and tear my hair. And then I hope I would have the courage to curse myself for raving and ranting, and to give her my blessing. How dare I withhold it at the behest of the child I once was and against the man I now have a duty to be?

This honest and difficult confession of emotional confusion and moral conviction brought an almost immediate response from Ralph Ellison, who was still licking his wounds from his set-to with Jewish dissenter Irving Howe. Ellison unhesitantly labeled Podhoretz one of "the new apologists for segregation." This outburst was provoked not only by Podhoretz's description of growing up in a mixed neighborhood in which the bullies were Negro, but by Podhoretz's implication that the solution to race problems was assimilation.

Assimilation, no matter how fervently it is sought by America's ethnic and racial minorities, and in particular Negroes and Jews, is also greatly feared. The fear involved is almost primeval; it is a terror of being swallowed. To

the Negro there is the knowledge that once he sets out upon the road of assimilation, he is destined to be a member of a caste elite in an artificial setting, and thus he necessarily deprives himself of contact with the black masses. The promise of assimilation, no matter how often it has been broken on the white end, has nonetheless resulted in the creation of a caste within the color code based, as is the larger system, on shades of darkness. The fairest black men of them all have become all too often colored white men consciously acting out a pathetic and macabre parody.

To Jews, too, the dilemma of assimilation is very real. Though they bear no visual physical mark to identify them, there is an internal brake barring their fall into the swift-running river of the other country. This breakwater is guilt, a guilt that so many Jews have sought to expiate by embracing, if not the Negro, then his cause. Still these Americanized Jews can never quite avert their inner eye from the archetypal image of the old man in his kaftan and tallis, slowly winding the worn leather of his phylacteries round his desiccated arms and the parchment-dry skin of his head, the Pentateuchal texts crammed into their little black boxes protruding like growths from his forehead and hand. This faded image is a reminder of the compressed family pushed in upon itself by the repression of outside terrors. It is a memory of failure.

Although some Jews look to Negroes for their sexuality, there is no evidence that Jews play any role at all in the Negro sexual fantasies. Yet there are ten thousand Negroes in the United States who claim a Jewish religious identity. What is it these Negroes seek from Jewishness? The best answer would seem to be some positive affirmation of their existence and the illusion of power. Such an illusion is fostered by the Jewish stereotype.

Before Negroes ever came into contact with real Jews, the black masses identified with the Hebrews of the Old Testament. Negro eschatology looks toward a Moses to lead the black folk into "a promised land of milk and

honey." After emancipation, Negro leaders became obsessed with the Jewish model. The Jews presented to the generations of Washington, Du Bois and Rustin the image of the most successful ethnic minority in the United States. Their example, while in sharp contrast to Negro reality, enticed Negro leadership. To those who had risen above the marginal bottom, identification with Jews seemed to offer an end to ostracism. The great number of Jews participating in civil rights causes and Negro charities offered, at least to the black middle class, the promise of a white hand in partnership. Among middle-class Negroes even today, there is appreciably less anti-Jewish feeling than there is among middle-class whites.

The conversion of night-club entertainer Sammy Davis, Jr., is the classic example of a Negro who sought a Jewish identification. Davis was born in Harlem. He grew up in vaudeville. As a member of the Will Mastin Trio, a Negro dance act, he lived apart from the usual black world and therefore was less affected by harsh discrimination. Yet, as he grew older he became increasingly aware of the segregated nature of American life. Clubs in which he performed barred Negro patrons. Hotels where he entertained refused to allow him to register.

At the same time he was suffering these rebuffs, he was being treated as an equal in the world of show business. The entertainment industry is unique. It is dominated by Jews. A large number of vaudevillians were Jews, as were a large number of night-club entertainers. A high proportion of theater owners and night-club proprietors are Jews. In addition, Jews are among the most prominent Broadway producers. At one time, almost all Hollywood moguls were Jewish. This show of power, along with the relative lack of bias in the industry, encouraged Davis in his belief in the strength and beneficence of Jewishness.

Eddie Cantor, one of Davis' early boosters, in turn, introduced him to the shmaltzy, ersatz world of show-biz Judaism. It is a brand of religion not unlike the Catholi-

cism practiced in Pat O'Brien movies. In place of ritual there is superstition. Standing in for theology are the mindless clichés of pal-ship.

Davis, who admits to a ravenous appetite for acceptance, recalls his seminal encounter with this Judaism; spotting a mezuzah that hung in Cantor's dressing room, he identified it as a "holy Hebrew charm." Plaintively Davis asked, "Do you have to be Jewish to wear one?" Cantor answered, "I'm sure the sentiment is what counts. I don't suppose God cares very much which floor we do our shopping on, just as long as we go to his store."

Heartened by this reply, Davis goes on to describe Jews as "a swinging bunch of people, I mean I've heard of persecution, but what they went through is ridiculous. There wasn't anybody who didn't take a shot at 'em. The whole world kept saying, 'You can't do this' and 'You can't do that' but they didn't listen. It's beautiful, they just plain didn't listen. They'd get kicked out of one place, so they'd just go on to the next one and keep swinging like they wanted to, believing in themselves and in their right to have rights, asking nothing but for people to leave 'em alone and get off their backs, and having the guts to fight to get themselves a little peace. But the great thing is that after thousands of years of waiting and holding on and fighting, they finally made it.

"I saw," Davis philosophizes, "the affinity between the Jew and the Negro. The Jews had been oppressed for three thousand years, instead of three hundred like us, but the rest was very much the same. Reading of their oppressions, their centuries of enslavement, I traced them from one end of the earth to the other, despised and rejected, searching for a home, for equality and human dignity, suffering the loneliness of being unwanted, surviving the destruction of their books. For thousands of years they hung onto their beliefs, enduring the scorn, the intolerance, the abuses against them, because they were 'different' . . ."

Davis concluded, "I believe a very large chunk of the racial thing is a question of changing images that remain in people's minds." The way the entertainer proposed to do this was by becoming Jewish. In this way he hoped to alter his own image, if not society's, of himself. Bizarre as Davis' conversion might seem to the white world, it is not singular; that which distinguishes his conversion from that of other Negroes is his celebrity. Davis is well enough known to have been admitted to a white Jewish congregation. Other black Jews have been forced to organize their own synagogues.

Black Jewish congregations are made up of Caribbean Island Negroes who are descendants of miscegenous marriages between Sephardic Jews and blacks, descendants of slaves on Jewish-owned Southern plantations, leftovers from the Back to Africa Movement of the 1920's, and recent converts. The conversions began with the Great Migration in 1915 and hit their peak in the thirties and forties. They are almost solely a Northern urban phenomena. Some converts are open about the source of their religious alliance. Others, in greater need of support, claim to be Falashas who have only recently discovered that they are offspring of the black Jews of Ethiopia and claim a pedigree that goes back to King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba.

Black Jews exist wherever there are large numbers of Negroes: in Harlem, Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia and Los Angeles. Their rituals range from impressionistic versions of Jewish ceremonials to exact replicas. Their existence is testimony to the desperate desire of American Negroes to find an acceptable self-image.

Off New Jersey's Route 561, three miles south of Hammonton, is a sign reading, "Colored Hebrew Community." The community consists of five houses and a synagogue. The synagogue, an L-shaped one-story building, is decorated with a sign that reads, *"Adat Beyt Moshen,"* a House of Prayer.

Every Saturday, sixty-five black Jews, most of them from Philadelphia, come to worship. Services are conducted by Rabbi Abel Respes, a forty-eight-year-old Negro who is the leader and the creator of the community. Respes, a tall, well-built man who sports a goatee and mustache, was born and raised in North Philadelphia. During his youth he saw this predominantly white Jewish area turn into a black slum.

He recalled, "My father was a janitor who liked to read the Bible and used to say, 'we are descended from the tribe of Judah. We are Jews.' "

Respes clung to the idea. Unlike the word "Negro," "Jew" conjured up to him a rich history and culture, a religion and a language. "The sort of things," Respes noted, "that give men worth. I remember when I was in my twenties, a friend took me to a meeting in South Philadelphia of Negroes who considered themselves Jews." Respes shook his head. "They were racists. They considered white Jews imposters. They held that the white man was little better than an animal. It was just the same old evil we'd all been suffering from, but in reverse: We hate them, rather than them hating us."

Nonetheless, Respes could not shake the idea of being Jewish from his mind. "One hot July night, it was in 1948, I had a vision, I woke up and heard a voice crying 'Seek God.' I wanted to put the sheet over my head. Then I heard a sound of rushing winds followed by a dream of two men, with faces bright as the sun, who approached and gave me a Bible, and I heard the message, 'Every word that is written here will be fulfilled.' "

Respes' response was a seven-day fast and constant prayers. He was somehow convinced God wanted him to preach Judaism to Negroes. He bought a Hebrew grammar and a Hebrew prayer book and taught himself about his chosen faith. He started with a group of Philadelphia blacks. He reached others through street-corner oratory. His message: "Judaism offers the Negro self-respect. The

Negro's claim to be Jewish is legitimate. The land of Israel is located in Western Asia and borders on North Africa. All of the native inhabitants of that region were non-white. When Spain expelled its Jews, in 1492, many of them went to Africa. It seems probable that some of them were brought later to America as slaves. The spirituals never sing of African rivers, it's always the 'Jordan' or the 'Red Sea.' They don't sing about African chiefs or kings, it's David or Moses or some other Jewish characters from the Bible."

Ten years after Respes' self-conversion, his congregation was torn by the dissension of militant black nationalism in the guise of the Black Muslim movement. In 1958, long before black nationalism surfaced into white-world visibility, it had exploded into the consciousness of the black ghetto-dweller. Referring to this split, Respes said, "Some of the dissenters were racists. They said I wasn't moving fast enough on the race question. They claimed I was being paid by the white man to keep things quiet."

Losing black nationalist members was not, however, the only problem to plague Rabbi Respes. He was also forced to contend with a rising tide of anti-Jewish sentiment. These feelings were fed by the fact that in North Philadelphia many of the white landlords, shopkeepers, pawnbrokers and constables were Jews, as were many of the white teachers, doctors and social workers. Most Negroes resented the Jews, whom they believed alternately repressed them and offered them charity. Assuming that Respes had been attracted to Judaism because the power structure from his vantage point seemed Jewish, Negroes were angered by what they considered to be his betrayal.

"The neighbors at 17th & Girard, in North Philadelphia, where we had our first temple, were unfriendly," Respes recalled. "They used to shout at our children, 'Nigger Jews!' They laughed at them for being poor. They thought it was ridiculous for anyone who was poor to claim to be a Jew." As a result of this baiting, the rabbi

and his family and four other families moved to an isolated area in South Jersey.

The story of the relationship between the black Jews and the white Jews is a sad one. Between 1920 and 1960 these colored sects were greeted with derision by the larger Jewish community. Their rabbis were considered charlatans, their movement a joke. "An American ordinarily must graduate from a Jewish theological seminary of which there are several in the United States, before he can call himself a rabbi," said white Rabbi Harold Goldfarb, executive director of the Philadelphia Board of Rabbis.

When they recovered from their initial shock, most Jews were bemused by the spectacle of Negroes trying to emulate them. It was then that the gag-line about the Yiddish-speaking, Negro handyman was born. "Boss," replies the black linguist to a question regarding his religion, "don't you think I got enough trouble just being a *Shvartzer?*"

The ghetto violence of the 1960's and the open expression of anti-Jewish feelings by black nationalists have made the Jewish community look with greater sympathy on these small, black Jewish congregations. By giving the black Jews some measure of recognition and support, the white Jews hope to maintain the goodwill of at least some Negroes.

12

LANDLORDS AND TENANTS

"I REMEMBER when I was a little kid, Roxbury was a very fine neighborhood." The speaker was forty-six-year-old Jacob Leabman, a tall, dark-haired mutual fund salesman who grew up in Boston's Jewish stronghold.

"The houses in Roxbury," he reminisced, "came from some other elegant era way back. They are big and solid. While it's true that when the Jews lived there it wasn't the kind of neighborhood it had once been, it certainly wasn't the kind of place it is now either." His voice seemed more distant: "Now it's all colored and very poor."

Leabman's lament on the evolution of Roxbury is a familiar one. It can be heard in every large city in America.

"My brother-in-law's father owned property in Roxbury for forty years," Leabman continued, a note of anger entering his voice, "and he didn't start out being an absentee landlord or a slum landlord either. Why, my sister

was married out of the family house there. But now,"—he paused, "they're getting out of the real estate business."

The sorrow, anger and confusion expressed by Leabman mirror the emotions of the larger Jewish community, emotions aroused not only by what has happened to the old neighborhood, but also by what has come to be the state of the relations between Jews and Negroes living there.

Oddly, this daily and increasingly unpleasant concourse between Jews and Negroes in the black ghettos was until recently unknown to the outside world. Then large-scale urban riots called attention to these problems. Jews unconnected with the slum economy were made aware of the fact that the prime relationship between Negroes and Jews was not the one shared by civil rights leaders and men of goodwill in the board rooms of the Jewish and inter-group agencies. The vital relationship was on the streets of the ghetto, in the black Jewish-owned bars, in the grubby real estate offices of the strip and in the confines of the bleak tenements themselves. The garish light of the riots not only illuminated the strange remorseless interlocking of Jews and Negroes, it also revealed that the American Jew's relationship to the Negro is much like his ancestors' relationship to the impoverished, submerged European peasantry only recently released from the bonds of serfdom. If the riots arose out of circumstances peculiar to the Negroes, the fact that the Jews—next to the Negroes themselves—were victims, is not, as the experts seem to imply, accidental. Close examination of economic, emotional, ideological and political factors surrounding the racial disturbances in the black belts of the Northern cities reveals that they have much in common with the pogroms of Europe. Although only a tiny portion of the Jewish community derives its livelihood from Negro patronage, the place of these Jews in the black slum ecology is similar to the niche occupied by Jews in the ghettos of Europe.

This peculiar similarity to the European tragedy was brought out by a concatenation of forces whose origins

were far removed from either Negroes or Jews. These included the social upheavals of nineteenth-century Europe, which resulted in the mass migration of Jews to America between 1880 and 1924; the bigotry which abruptly curtailed that migration in the mid 1920's; the Southern agricultural depression and the two world wars that propelled the rural Southern Negro off the land and into the cities of the North.

The timing of these great movements set the stage for the confrontation between Negroes and Jews. That confrontation, once having occurred, set off its own chain of events.

"I'm not exactly sure why the Jews started to leave Roxbury," Leabman said. "It wasn't just because Negroes began moving in, at least that wasn't the reason in the beginning. It was a combination of things. Roxbury Jews made a lot of money during the Second World War. They felt they could afford to move out of the old neighborhood. You know, status and that kind of thing." Tracing the Jewish exodus from Boston, Leabman said, "It started with families moving within the Boston city limits, principally into Matapan. Then they started going out into the suburbs, to Milton, Newton and Sharon, where I live. The Negroes weren't the original cause for the Jews moving out but their empty places were taken by Negroes. And I'm sure that this fact speeded things up. In the end it might have been the main reason the last Jewish people moved."

Roxbury, the neighborhood they left behind, has had an almost 100 percent changeover in twenty years and had become Boston's black festering sore. On June 2, 1967, its major commercial street, Blue Hills Avenue, was the scene of prolonged rioting. The Boston outbreak, however, was only the beginning of a summer of violence that ended in the burning of Newark and Detroit.

Across the country the old Jewish neighborhoods which had now turned black were going up in flames. In 1967

alone, eighty-six persons were killed, 2,056 injured, 11,094 arrested, and property damage ranged in the hundreds of millions of dollars. The major victims of these disasters were Negro. The greatest white financial losers were Jews, for they are by far the largest white holders of real estate, both commercial and residential, in Boston's Roxbury, New York's Harlem, Philadelphia's Strawberry Mansion, Cincinnati's Avondale, Chicago's Lawndale, Detroit's West Side, and Newark's Central Ward. Not surprisingly, most of these landlords are barely one generation removed from being tenants in the tenements they now rent out to Negroes.

In 1964, Philadelphia's Commissioner of Licenses and Inspection, Richard Buford, compiled a list of the major slumlords. In the North Central section, the bleakest of the city's black ghettos, twenty-three of the thirty-two worst offenders against the housing code were identifiable as Jews, and three as Negroes. In addition, thirty-five of the eighty-two realtors operating in the area were Jewish. Negroes accounted for twenty-one offices and Irishmen for nine. The remaining seventeen agents were divided among Italians, Poles and those with Anglo-Saxon names. The largest offices, however, were run by Jews. Although it is true that realtors are not necessarily property owners, most of those in that section of the city are. Time is just beginning to alter this racial and ethnic balance.

As well as owning a substantial number of tenements, Jews dominate the rent collection field in Philadelphia, the nation's fourth-largest city, with the country's third-largest Negro population. Of those who list themselves as specialists in "landlord-tenant relationships," the current euphemism for the nasty job of extracting late rentals from unwilling, if not downright hostile, lessees, two-thirds are known to be Jews.

Two questions greatly vex the outside Jewish community: How did Jews, largely of Eastern European origin and not more than a generation removed from being resi-

dents of these very same neighborhoods, become slumlords? What will be the result of their unattractive presence?

The answer to the first question lies in the residential history of these Negro communities. The second is being given by the black power and black nationalist politicians. The pattern of Negro and Jewish housing in Roxbury and Philadelphia is not unique to these cities. In fact, the story of one has been repeated in all the great urban centers.

North Central Philadelphia, popularly known by its police sobriquet, "The Jungle," is a 2.5-square-mile area that lies between the two rivers that formed the boundaries of William Penn's once Greene Towne. It neighbors on lovely Fairmount Park and the gleaming new towers of the revived central business district. Its housing is varied. On the eastern fringes the small peaked roof dwellings date back to colonial Philadelphia. The bulk of the brick two- and three-story flat-topped houses in the central portion date from the years 1865–1880, while the mansions in the western sector were built between 1880 and 1900.

As the original structure of the housing indicates, a variety of people inhabited it before the coming of the poor Negroes. At one time or another in the last century, nearly every section of this ragged square was at least partially occupied by Jewish families.

Beginning in 1830, a tide of German-Jewish immigrants, along with communities of English, Irish and Germans, made their homes on the fringe of the old city in the district known as Northern Liberties, between Vine Street and Columbia Avenue. At first they lived on the eastern end in peak-roofed wooden bandboxes, some of which still exist but are no longer occupied by Jews.

During the nineteenth century, as the number of Jewish settlers increased the older population shifted westward physically and upward socially. The sons and grandsons of the first German-Jewish immigrants gradually

left the working class for the middle class; they became merchants instead of peddlers. The houses that they moved into shortly before and after the Civil War were the newly constructed two- and three-story brick buildings.

In 1880 a fresh wave of Jewish refugees, this time from Eastern Europe, broke over the older settlements, overwhelming them and forcing them to expand. By the turn of the century, Jews had filled up the area between the two rivers that set the initial boundaries of the old city north of City Hall in a band nearly two and a half miles deep. Broad Street, a once elegant tree-lined thoroughfare of millionaire mansions, became a major axis of Jewish religious life. Synagogues of all types—orthodox, conservative and reform—representing worshippers from the old Sephardic families, the not-so-old German-Jewish families and the recent Russian and Eastern European Jewish immigrants were built along its sidewalks.

The Jews, however, were not the sole possessors of the region. West of Broad, in the brownstone mansions along such streets as Diamond, 16th and 19th, affluent second-generation German Jews lived alongside upper-class white Protestants. In less pretentious brick houses east of Broad, Eastern European Jews lived peacefully on streets adjoining those occupied by the then small working-class Negro population.

Sadie Rosenfield Ersner, widow of the first Jewish professor in a Philadelphia medical school, daughter of a ladies' hat manufacturer and granddaughter of an Odessa-born New Jersey chicken farmer, reminisced about the old days and the hopscotch game of Jewish residential and social mobility.

"I always think of myself as American, although I am also very much aware of being Jewish," she began. "Both my parents were born in Russia but they came to this country when they were very young children under five. So they, too, were Americans.

"I was born in 1900 in a house at 728 Snyder Avenue in South Philadelphia, which is still a second- and third-generation Eastern European Jewish neighborhood, although the Italians have been crowding them there recently. When I was only ten months old we moved to Strawberry Mansion in North Philadelphia. It was a beautiful section of the city then bordering, as it does, on Fairmount Park. All of the houses were big but those on Diamond Street and 33rd Street can truthfully be called mansions. The neighborhood was largely white Protestant with a sprinkling of German Jews. We were among the first Russian Jews in Strawberry Mansion."

By the time the Rosenfields made their move, the old-line Protestants were already starting to move to the nearer reaches of the Main Line, which had been made accessible to the city by the recently completed commuter train line—the Paoli Local. A decade later almost all the old guard had departed and the German Jews were beginning to notice that the new arrivals were their Eastern European co-religionists. Fearful that their status be demeaned by close proximity to those whom they considered members of a lower social order, the German Jews also moved. They went north and east, back across Broad Street to Park and Tioga Avenues, before their ultimate trek to the suburbs in the 1920's.

By 1916 Strawberry Mansion was a Russian-Jewish stronghold. In that year it elected its first Jewish state senator, Republican attorney Benjamin Golder. Although Golder was a part of the powerful and corrupt old Vare machine, he was greeted as a hero by his constituents, for his selection proved that the Russian-American Jews had come of age.

The heyday of Jewish residential hegemony of what is now Negro North Philadelphia was reached during World War I. Soon after that the Jewish exodus began, followed by the 1924 Immigration Act, which barred any further influx of Eastern European Jews. The places left by the

wealthier Americanized Jews were filled by the Negroes. In 1964 the last of these struggling Jewish survivors were driven out by the riot.

Recalling this turn of events, Sadie Rosenfield Ersner said, "By the time I was married in 1923 Strawberry Mansion was a hundred percent Russian Jewish and the older wealthier Russian families who had made money during the First World War began to move out, too. They went to Wynnefield and then to Germantown.

"Negroes had nothing to do with these Jewish moves. Colored people didn't start coming into the neighborhood until the 1940's. By that time the only Jews left were the poor ones."

In less than twenty-five years, Strawberry Mansion, like Boston's Roxbury, became a black slum. The Negroes, unlike the Jews, however, demonstrated no sudden upward mobility.

The first blacks in Philadelphia were slaves who had no district of their own but lived in the houses of their masters. In 1775 the Quakers, who then dominated the life of the colonial metropolis, openly opposed slavery and Philadelphia became a magnet to free Negroes and runaway slaves. The propensity of Negroes to settle in Penn's Towne was increased by the 1780 Act of Gradual Emancipation. Between 1790 and 1800 the Negro population of the city increased 176 percent, from 2,489 to 6,880, and in 1810 Negroes formed one-tenth of the city's population. By 1870, however, their presence had been diluted to less than 4 percent by the influx of white Europeans, a situation which created fierce economic competition and hostility between the native blacks and the foreign whites. It wasn't until World War I that the numbers of Negroes increased noticeably. Between 1916 and 1917, 33,500 Negroes came into the city to work in the labor-short war industries. The restricted immigration legislation of 1924 allowed the black population to grow proportionately as well as numerically. By 1925 there were

over 200,000 blacks in the city, a situation which forced them into finding housing beyond their traditional neighborhoods.

In 1927, just four years after Sadie Rosenfield Ersner married and moved out of North Philadelphia, Judge Raymond Pace Alexander, a prominent black attorney, moved into one of the fashionable white neighborhoods west of Broad. In the same year the Reverend William Gray, pastor of the Bright Hope Baptist Church, one of the largest Negro congregations in the city, bought a home on the east side of Broad. His was the third Negro family on the block. These early settlers who moved into the North Philadelphia area were different from those who followed them in that they were members of the black bourgeoisie.

The Depression in the thirties and the war in the forties temporarily halted these residential changes; but with the coming of peace and prosperity the housing situation began to explode. Rushing outward from the city were the young married couples of the second- and third-generation white immigrants, following in the wake of the older white Protestant families. They rapidly filled up the surrounding suburban counties in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, leaving a semi-vacuum in the core of the city.

The building of the suburbs was made possible by the federal government. As a stimulus and support to the construction industry, the Federal Housing Authority underwrote mortgages on newly constructed homes. These mortgages, however, were granted in accordance with local prejudices, which meant that new homes were almost never within the reach of Negroes. This applied to Negro veterans, too. Although G.I. mortgages were not limited to new housing, millions of veterans in pursuit of the American dream—their own home on a plot of grass far from the sights and smells of the old neighborhood—used their mortgage options to buy houses in new develop-

ments. Discrimination within the developments, however, restricted these purchasers to whites.

The unintentional side effect of this massive injection of federal assistance into the new-housing market was to depress the value of old city houses. Consequently, banks refused to hold mortgages on aging in-city homes or to finance their improvement. Middle-class families who preferred to remain in the city were financially penalized for their choice. Hundreds of thousands of young couples across the country who could not afford either the 25–30 percent down payment required by conventional financing were unable to buy homes in the city or obtain the high-interest home improvement loans necessary to recondition it. The only occupants for these houses were Negroes. Unable to escape, for social and economic reasons, the black population remained in the city.

Between 1950 and 1960 alone the nation's twelve largest cities lost more than two million white residents and gained nearly two million Negroes. It is estimated that more than four million Negroes have moved out of the rural South into the urban North and West since the end of World War II.

In Philadelphia the Negro population in 1950 was 378,-968 and constituted 18.3 percent of the total. By 1960 the number had jumped to 535,032 and constituted 26.7 percent of the citizenry. Current estimates place the head count at over 700,000 and the percentage above the one-third mark. The white population declined proportionately from 81.7 percent to 66 percent and the city as a whole suffered an actual population loss of 250,000 persons, all of whom were white, most in the family-forming ages.

In the five wards that comprise Negro North Central Philadelphia, the population shift has been even more dramatic. In the past decade and a half the Negro population has risen by 32 percent, while the white has declined

by 32 percent. In 1960 there were 196,981 residents of whom 174,824 were Negro and 22,157 white. Of these whites, approximately 15,000 were Jews. By 1970, Jewish residents numbered less than 6,000 and the area had suffered a total population loss of 25,565 since the mid-century census.

Further exacerbating the situation of overcrowded housing in an area of overall population decline has been the urban renewal program, initially designed to revive the core of the city by slum clearance but which made small provision for the poor. Despite a clause in the original Urban Renewal Act calling for the relocation of displaced persons, a Philadelphia Housing Association study revealed that 71.7 percent of those forced to move by redevelopment found unsatisfactory housing.

In order to replace low-income slum dwellings with homes for the middle class in one section of North Philadelphia, more than 20,000 poor residents were displaced; of these, 15,000 were Negroes, 14,000 of whom moved into homes as inadequate as those they had been forced to vacate. In 1960 the momentum of the new wave of black refugees caused the Negroes to spill over the borders of their old settlements and completely occupy the last of the old North Philadelphia Jewish neighborhoods—Sadie Rosenfield Ersner's Strawberry Mansion. By 1970 Negroes formed a solid black band across just those parts of the city that had been predominately Jewish.

"I lived in this neighborhood all my life," said Isaac Goldstein, a Strawberry Mansion realtor. "It used to be a fine place. Now it is a hell hole. Why? I'll tell you why. It's the people. Because it's people, not buildings, that make a slum."

The Philadelphia story has been repeated in Chicago, Detroit, Boston, New York, Cleveland, Dayton and Cincinnati. Beginning in the 1880's all of these cities contained ethnic slums surrounding the central business district. Once immigrants learned English and lost their

foreign manners, they moved into other ethnic settlements in working-class districts further away. Finally, even these neighborhoods were deserted. Of the white immigrants, only the Slavs, the Italians and the Jews still live in large homogeneous communities, though these, too, are rapidly showing signs of disintegration.

The Negroes, however, have reversed the pattern. In Chicago up until 1915, only half of the city's black population lived in the black belt. The rest have scattered around the periphery of the business district. Currently 90 percent of the city's one million Negroes are confined within sharply defined black neighborhoods.

This increasing urban segregation seems irreversible within the limits of a "democratic" but caste-oriented society. Short of the adoption of totalitarian measures limiting the internal movement of Negro citizens, rural blacks will continue to gravitate toward the cities, and unless there is a change in the national mentality they will live in apartheid conditions. Bowing to the inevitable, a relatively small group of black militants have seized upon these harsh facts and sought to turn them to their own political advantage by crying out against integration. They have found followers and sympathetic listeners among people whose efforts to integrate have been humiliatingly rejected.

In his book *Negroes in Cities,* Dr. Karl Taeuber, formerly of the University of Chicago Population and Research Center, revealed the true dimensions of urban Negro ghetto-ization. Using what he called a Segregation Index, he measured the degree of apartheid in 207 American cities by computing the percentage of nonwhites who would have to shift from one block to another to create an integrated metropolis. In Chicago the figure was 92.6 percent, in Memphis, 92 percent, Yonkers, N.Y., 78.1 percent, New York City, 79.3 percent, Baltimore, 89.6 percent, Cleveland, 91.3 percent, Washington, D.C., 79.7 percent, St. Louis, 90.5 percent, Milwaukee, 88.1 percent, San

Francisco, 69.3 percent, Boston, 83.9 percent, Newark, 71.6 percent, Cleveland, 73.1 percent, Rochester, 82.4 percent, Dayton, 91.3 percent.

Whitney Young, the head of the moderate, interracial Urban League, pointed out that Negroes, unlike Jews, Italians, and other white immigrants, do not live in neighborhoods. They live in ghettos. The difference between the two, Young said, is that "ghetto residents cannot escape. Unfortunately, this distinction is not really visible to millions of Americans." Young, of course, was comparing Negro housing opportunities in America in the last half of the twentieth century to Jewish housing conditions in Eastern Europe in the first half of the century. At that time Jews in many countries were confined to particular neighborhoods and districts. It was a confinement that ended in the Nazi gas chambers.

The custom of restricting the areas where housing is available to Negroes has made the operation of slum real estate a profitable venture. In Chicago, for example, the fact that the black third of the population is confined to less than a quarter of the city's acreage has resulted in a tremendous demand for living space and a precipitous rise in rental rates.

The neighborhoods that are quickest to give way to Negro pressure are those occupied by Jews, whose economic success has given them greater residential mobility than that enjoyed by other recent immigrant groups. Even Harlem, recognized as the Negro capital of the country, was once a Jewish district. Its present boundaries are primarily the result of a wild real estate speculation and a residential building boom which followed the construction, at the beginning of this century, of the first subway lines connecting upper with lower Manhattan. When the boom subsided and the bottom dropped out of the real estate market, the Harlem developers found themselves with thousands of vacant housing units. Unable to fill them, they turned in desperation to Negroes and Puerto

Ricans. Although the first residents were middle class, the average income of new arrivals decreased over the years. In 1926 resentment and racial tensions flared up; on July 26 a pitched battle was fought between Jews and Puerto Ricans. The weapons were lead pipes, knives and billiard cues. The outcome of the fight was inconclusive, but the Jews started to move out anyway. They did not, however, completely sell out. To this day Jews own a large share of Harlem's real estate. A 1,000-page quarter-of-a-million-dollar study of New York housing, commissioned by Mayor Lindsay in 1967 and released in April 1970, revealed that 52 percent of the city's all-black buildings are now owned by blacks, and that 66 percent of the landlords are small owners holding no more than two or three properties. Nonetheless, the lion's share of valuable property in Harlem is owned by outsiders.

The population shift begun in New York and repeated in cities across the nation inaugurated the ghetto relationship between Jews and lower-class Negroes. Its culmination was reached in 1966, when Martin Luther King picked Lawndale, a once-fashionable Jewish neighborhood in Chicago, as the site of his first rent strike. Lawndale, called "slumdale" by its present inmates, is inundated with cheap saloons, second-hand stores, store-front churches and pool halls. Into its once-stately single family dwellings and the staid old-fashioned apartment houses, which are still largely owned by Jews, are crammed 130,000 Negroes with an average annual income of $3,200. On "Bloody 16th Street," so named because it is a gathering place for muggers, hold-up men and drug addicts, a two-bedroom third-floor walk-up apartment costs ninety dollars a month.

The Chicago pattern of high rentals for degraded housing is much the same in Philadelphia. There the black third of the population is locked up in less than 20 percent of the city's acreage and spends 35 percent of its income for substandard dwellings. In a survey made of residents of the Philadelphia jungle, housing was listed as

their biggest problem. Unlike realtor Isaac Goldstein, the tenants find fault not with themselves but with their landlords.

In all too many instances the landlord is a Jew. Typical of the callous yet fearful landlord is the Gornish slumlord dynasty of Philadelphia. George Gornish along with his brother Sidney and his sister Sylvia has owned and operated more than three hundred properties in the black slums of South, West and near North Philadelphia.

Headquartered in a reconverted house on South Broad Street, the Gornish office has the atmosphere of a beleaguered fortress. The business itself was started sixty-five years ago by the now long-deceased Gornish *père*. From the beginning it dealt in low-income properties, and in the days of old Mr. Gornish, himself a poor immigrant, the clientele was largely white and Jewish. In the early years of the twentieth century the Gornishes catered to the flood of Eastern European Jews then disembarking from ships docked along Delaware Avenue. "Although, even then," George admitted, "a certain percentage of our properties were occupied by the colored."

George, a short, muscular bald man with yellowing skin, who wearily makes his way around his properties in Murray space shoes, claims that the family has been trying to get out of the Negro slum business; but he constantly contradicts himself. "There are such good buys in Strawberry Mansion." He sights, "I can't resist them." Gornish well knows the only possible tenants for these "good buys" are Negro.

George explained the Gornish business: "Of course we don't manage all the property we own. We, the family—my brother Sidney and my sister Sylvia—only take care of South Philadelphia. North and West Philly are in the hands of other agents. In this business you got to be near the customers and the property." He then volunteered the information that he pays the agents who manage these

properties 10 percent of the rentals. The ordinary real estate managerial commission is 5 percent.

In South Philadelphia the tenants, if not the properties, are subject to the close personal attention of the Gornish family. Potential tenants entering the Broad Street office find themselves confronted by a glass partition. Behind it are located one or another of the Gornishes, their salesmen and their two-girl clerical staff—all white.

After the potential tenant is checked out, he is shown around the available properties. Upon acceptance the new tenant is handed a rent book. Although units are rented by the month, rents are collected by the week, and the tenant is supposed to report into the South Broad Street fortress. If he fails to appear, George or Sidney goes around to visit him. The tenant's receipt is George's scribbled figures in the rent book.

Miss Gornish, a short, stocky woman with heavy arms and legs, is in charge of the dunning department. "When they get behind in their rent [Miss Gornish's definition of 'behind' is four or five days] I start to call them on the telephone and write to them. Then George stops around to see them and makes some kind of arrangement. Ach," she exclaimed, steeling herself before launching into the favorite Gornish monologue: how the Gornishes are alternately persecuted, loved, threatened and respected by their "no-good tenants," who are never referred to by name, but only by address. "George," she will say, "what about 2629 Sedgley Avenue—second floor front?

"The only way to get those people to live right is to spank them, not hurt them or hate them, but treat them like children. You know they always ask for me," said Miss Gornish proudly. "But I find that the longer you let them go, the harder it is to get them to pay up. I try to explain to them when I talk to them that if you are a good rent payer, you are a good credit risk. You know if they come in here to see me, I always get them to pay.

"Now, of course, you get a lot of promises in this business, but you get to know whose word is good and whose isn't. I would say about half of the people are decent. I mean there are some good among them. At any rate I try to help them all. I explain that if they don't pay up, they'll owe all that money to a constable and that's like throwing money out." Constables were non-salaried officers of the lower courts who earned fees for collection work. In an effort to correct the system's abuses, the elected office of constable was abolished in 1970 and in its stead the court appoints writ servers who in many cases are the former constables, who continue to refer to themselves as constables.

She shook her head sadly. "But some of them would

before they will
garnish salaries."
ania.)
ge snorted, "The
tenant is that if
nant for his fees

said, "The con-
but they never
ney do is walk in
care them. Then
he tenant has to
cts a little bit of
he's at it all over
end result is that
all the constable

es, is second only
rated far worse
ng. "They move
use is empty and

have to have their things put up for sale
pay up. The landlord ought to be able to
(He can in some states outside of Pennsylv

After the mention of constables, Georg
trouble with putting the constable on a
you don't watch him, he'll bleed the te
and we won't get our rent."

Describing constable practices, George
stables like to levy and to keep levying
want to bring anything to a sale. What th
a place and take out the good item to s
they hold the thing and to get it back t
come to them. Then the constable colle
the rent and a lot of fees and next month
again. It can go on for months and the
the tenant gets so far behind because of
fees tacked on that he ends up skipping."

The evil of "skipping," to the Gornish
to the evil of nonpayment of rent. It is
than destructiveness or bad housekeepi
and they don't even let you know the ho

then it gets vandalized. That's worse even than not getting all the rent. I don't want anybody out until I've got another tenant.

"That's why I give a constable ten days after a levy to make a sale or evict the tenant," Miss Gornish commented. "I'm not going to let them bleed us, too. I find," she continued, pursing her lips together with determination, "that the constable who is firm is best. He can't collect unless he is feared. Fear really is all that he has going for him."

Although most slumlords won't say how many of their tenants are levied on each month and how many are evicted by court action, it is obvious that they have extralegal arrangements. Among the privileges granted by these minor court functionaries are the use of official cards and stationery to write dunning letters. In evoking the office, the landlords are able to invoke the image of the law and frighten their recalcitrant tenants into paying the rent.

"These people," George Gornish said, referring to his tenants, "don't know how to handle finances but they have big eyes. They ride to the constables' offices in taxis and buy television sets and cars while they are under levy. I know because the man who sold it to them on time, of course, will call up and tell me. They don't call to get a credit rating because they know these people don't have any credit."

He pulled a card out of a stack that lay on the paper littered desk and waved it around. "Here's a single man. He's a truck driver. He grosses a hundred and twenty-three dollars a week when he works. His rent is thirty-two dollars a month. You would think he could pay his rent but he's always behind."

"George has been to see him five times in the last six weeks," Sylvia added. "People nowadays have the idea that they can pay when they please. It used to be when people didn't pay we just padlocked the door."

The Gornishes' current method of ridding themselves of an unwanted tenant who has paid his rent is to double the rent. The Gornishes do this regardless of leases.

Then, bemoaning the lot of landlords, Sylvia reminisced. "We had a family that was very destructive and they wouldn't pay their repair bills. Finally we decided to

living. I'm sick and tired of all this sympathy for the poor. Sure, I think they should have a decent place to live, but somebody has got to think of the landlord, too. Sure, it would be better if people could stay in one place, but I can't let them stay if they don't pay their rent."

Sylvia added, "I blame the do-gooders. They try and help these people with other people's money. The government ruined them. It made them arrogant. When did you ever hear of all this raping? Now it happens all the time."

George interrupted. "It should only happen to Mr. Do-Gooder. His whole family should be raped."

The Gornishes' rage, hysterical as it is, is not without foundation; a Philadelphia Housing Association study reveals that out of every five low-income Negro families, one falls into a category that can best be described as a migratory-problem household. More or less typical of these migrant households is a West Philadelphia woman we shall call Mary White. Her name is fictitious, but her case is real. Born on November 15, 1946, she was a school dropout at seventeen, having never advanced beyond the ninth grade. In the years 1963 through 1965 she gave birth to three illegitimate children by as many fathers. In the course of her chaotic existence, she became a frequent user of both alcohol and narcotics.

In 1966 she applied to the Philadelphia County Board of Assistance for aid to dependent children. During the following two years Mary and her family had eight known addresses—all within a ten-block area. When she first arrived at the relief office, she was living in a rented apartment with her grandmother and planning to move to a flat then occupied by her sister. After four months of subletting from her sister without the landlord's permission, she decided to move into an apartment of her own. Within six months she had moved again because, as she explained, "I don't like the other people in the building."

The reason for their exodus from this fourth dwelling

was an eviction notice. "She got drunk," claimed the distraught Jewish landlord, "and broke all the windows in her apartment, and besides she was back in the rent."

Once more Mary took refuge with her sister, who had also moved at least once since their last sojourn together. Again, proximity bred anger. "I'm moving out," Mary told the welfare caseworker. Her sister had actually threatened to throw Mary out onto the street.

Within days the family, three children and a mother not yet old enough to vote, moved. Toward the close of 1966 Mary White found herself behind in the rent with a court order placed against her few ragged belongings. To escape a public sale on the sidewalk, she moved out during the night. By August of 1969 she had made six more moves, wailing complaints against her white Jewish landlords. Contrapuntally, the landlords lamented about the garbage, filth and destruction left in the wake of the White family.

Families like the Whites are the bane of landlords' existence. It is just these people—the ones in deepest economic and emotional trouble—for whom society has made no provision. They are barred from all public housing, a situation which ironically forces those least able to withstand the vicissitudes of free enterprise to seek shelter entirely in the profit-oriented private market.

Because there has been little residential stability in the lives of these urban vagabonds, an apartment or a rented house is viewed as a temporary shelter rather than permanent quarters, and it is treated accordingly.

In these migrant, troubled families the line between exploiter and exploitee frequently vanishes. The tenants who are irregular or neglectful in the payment of their rent are indifferent to the property they lease or the damages they incur. The landlords, unable to collect their rents, send an agent after the tenants, which adds to the overdue bills a staggering array of late charges and enforcement fees. The tenants view these actions as a kind

of eviction and they flee. The landlords, left with vacant properties which then become prime targets for neighborhood vandals, see their former lessees as rent skippers.

The Jewish landlord/operator of low-income properties is like the white Protestant, Irish or Negro landlord: he is in business to make a profit, not to provide social services. In order to make a profit from a stock of over-aged, run-down houses with a high turnover rate, he charges rents that are often disproportionately high and keeps repairs to a minimum; he also deals with rent defaulters summarily. He has to because the slum landlord business is not really a very profitable one. Professor George Sternlieb of Rutgers, in *The Urban Dilemma,* his study of 963 buildings in New York City, noted that 30 percent of the old-law tenements built before 1900 are losing money and that two-thirds of the small buildings put up after 1929 earn less than 6 percent of their assessment. Twelve per-

Jews did not begin life in America as landholders, though they soon became substantial realtors. They rented and bought their first property from non-Jewish owners. As they became acclimated to America, and entered the nation's commercial life, they took control of their neighborhood business enterprises, including the real estate offices. When the Jews moved out of these areas, they were often superseded by immigrant Southern Negroes. These newcomers lacked both the skill and the capital to compete with the Jewish realtors.

Accompanying the population shift was a drastic devaluation of real estate. Agents who had been buying and selling in these old city neighborhoods for a generation were tempted by the bargain rates. They bought up blocks of property. These acquisitions were at first sold and then subdivided and rented to Negro immigrants.

The Negro purchasers put the bulk of their money into mortgage payments and thus had little left over to use for maintenance. As a result, many Negro owner-occupied

properties are in almost as frightful condition as the rented facilities.

The recessions of the late forties and early fifties hit the new Negro home owners hard. The last to be hired, they were the first to be fired. Unable to keep up mortgage payments, the owners of many of these houses were forced to give back their properties to the mortgage companies, the banks, and the savings and loan associations. Most of the homes were badly rundown. The Veterans Administration, which had offered G.I.'s mortgage money, and the Federal Housing Association refused to finance houses in areas of substantial mortgage default. Though both agencies follow a policy of judging each property on its own merits, practically speaking, areas with old and rundown properties, i.e., Negro slums, are taboo.

To rebuild the market the agents-cum-owners attempted lease purchase plans which they financed themselves. On a house that the agent might purchase for $3,000 with a cash down payment of $600, the asking price was $6,000 with a $300 cash down payment. If the buyer was able to maintain the payments and build up equity in the house, the broker would get a bank to refinance the property. Many buyers, however, failed to meet payments and the houses reverted once more to the brokers. Eventually these buildings became unsalable and today in the heart of urban black ghettos there is no such thing as a home-buying market.

The fact that there is little or no market for these homes has, oddly enough, led to the small-scale slum landlord,

d Roxbury, more
ale value of their
ners turned to the
ve, originally con-
nent business ven-
ord subdivided his

into Lawndale, Strawberry Mansion an
and more Jews wanted to leave. The s
homes dropped, and so these home own
simple expedient of renting. This mov
sidered temporary, soon became a perma
ture. In time the once reluctant landlo

property to increase his income from rentals. He found that he could obtain a maximum return on his money by making a minimal investment.

Jews, unlike other white Americans, have an entrepreneurial tradition perfectly suited to the poor-black trade. They understood the problems of dealing with an insolvent and unstable clientele. Jews, especially those of Eastern European descent, were accustomed to dealing with impoverished peasants who lacked middle-class values that emphasize work and thrift. Unlike other whites, they do not feel that providing services for Negroes is a threat to their status. This sense of superiority is bolstered not only by the obvious cultural, social and economic advantages Jews have in comparison to Negroes but by a religious heritage that emphasizes the idea that the children of Israel are a chosen people. Poor whites, who lack such an ego-supportive tradition and find themselves in deadly competition with blacks for jobs, houses and social services, have no such sense of security. It was natural for the Jewish landlords and businessmen to fill the vacuum created by the flight of other white realtors and businessmen in newly black areas. The Jewish operators had the necessary capital to buy up blocks of rapidly devaluating residential real estate as well as the experience to know how to operate such properties profitably. Negroes, on the other hand, did not have the experience, the education, the capital or the opportunity to compete with Jews or to form any significant Negro business and real estate interests in their own neighborhoods.

Until recently Negroes only occasionally rebelled against this oppressive state of affairs. Their rebellion usually took a violent or destructive form and was carried out on an individual basis in a heated emotional atmosphere. Beginning in the mid 1960's, however, a new type of protest began to make itself heard. By 1970 it was a strident chorus led by Negro militants and their white, frequently Jewish, New Left allies.

Early in 1963 the Levine brothers, like the Gornishes a South Philadelphia Jewish slum dynasty, got a taste of the new militancy. The Levines had showed little ability to maintain their properties, many of which were filled with uncollected trash and garbage. The tenants had complained ineffectively for years. Finally the local CORE stepped in and devised a plan to clear out the accumulated wastes, trucked it to Wynnefield, a middle- and upper-middle-class Jewish neighborhood, and dumped it on the Levines' front lawns.

This example of direct action offered its instigators and members of the Negro neighborhood where Levine property was located great satisfaction. However, it failed in its avowed, if not real, purpose—to shame the Levines and arouse the consciences of the Levines' Wynnefield neighbors.

The Levines' Wynnefield neighbors were incensed—but at the dumpers, not at the Levines. Although this reaction should have been easy to predict, it surprised many of the Jewish liberals who were then involved in CORE and who had helped to plan and execute the caper. It served to illustrate, for those who were willing to observe, that the average middle-class Jew's reaction to low-income Negroes did not differ measurably from that of his gentile counterpart.

Louis E. Lomax, the late noted Negro journalist and social critic, wrote in his book *The Negro Revolt* (1962):

> The Negro's close relationship to the Jew is ambivalent. Some individual Jews are our closest allies, and I fully agree with Baldwin when he says that Negroes expect Jews to "know better because they too have suffered." I am with him too, when he describes Negro resentment over certain practices carried on by individual Jews in Harlem.
>
> Jews are white people, but orthodox or conformist, they are a people with a tradition which, as both a the-

oretical and practical matter, offends Negroes. The point I am belaboring was certified by a study into suburbia conducted by the University of Chicago in 1959. The study concluded that Negroes were getting into suburbia but that they were finding it extremely difficult. Of all the ethnic suburban ghettos, the study concluded the Jewish communities were the most adamant about keeping Negroes out.

"Jewishness," Lomax goes on to say, "not prejudice, is the explanation for this. Jews in these gilt-edged ghettos oppose integration not because they hated or discriminated against Negroes, rather they were seeking to realize that element in their tradition which calls for togetherness.

"In 1961," Lomax testified, "I spoke before the Jewish graduate club of Columbia University. This issue arose, with the younger Jews siding with me, that the Jewish power structure upheld segregation—not out of prejudice but out of traditional motivations. The older Jews, however, became furious with me. The creepiest feeling I have had in a long time ran down my back when one of the older Jews shook his finger at me and said, 'We Jews have had to fight everybody. Now it looks like we must fight the black man. If so, we are ready!' "

How, Lomax wonders, do you satisfy a Jew's right to live among other Jews without abrogating the right of a Negro to buy the house next to his? And should this right be satisfied?

Jewish resistance to Negro integration in the suburbs presents a problem and challenge to the entire Jewish community and to its basic moral and ethical stance. Traditionally, all the factions of organized Jewry have fought for the principle of "open housing." They have exorcised exclusionary housing covenants and have fought through the courts to get these covenants declared unconstitutional, just as they have led the battles in the state houses and

city councils for the enactment of open-housing legislation.

Yet this official stance is seemingly contradicted by the behavior of Jews in suburbia. The fact that the sentiment of most Jews is more in keeping with that of other whites was indicated by the vote in California in 1966 on an amendment to abridge the open-housing law, the notorious Rumford Amendment. As Harold Trimble, an American Jewish Committee stalwart, put it, "the Jews are very vocal for open housing but they vote against it."

An analysis of voting patterns on the open-housing legislation showed that the vote in predominantly Jewish neighborhoods against open housing differed little from that in non-Jewish neighborhoods. The contradiction between official Jewish positions and actual Jewish behavior is yet to be recognized, let alone reconciled.

A landlord at the opposite end of the pole from the Gornishes and the Levines is Morris Milgram. Milgram, a builder who specializes in the construction of middle-income, racially integrated developments, is much more in keeping with the image that Americans in general and Jewish liberals in particular like to have of themselves.

Milgram, a thin, slightly stoop-shouldered man in his middle fifties, is best remembered for his attempt to build an integrated middle-income housing project in Deerfield, Illinois. The prospect of such a project enraged the largely non-Jewish population of that community. As a result, the municipal government seized Milgram's land on the pretext that it wanted to make it into a park. Though Milgram's effort was no doubt a fine one, it was viewed with indifference by the mass of Jews and with actual hostility by many white Christians around the country.

In 1966 Milgram, acting out of the Jewish liberal tradition, formed the National Committee on Tithing Investments. It is a coalition of prominent citizens, most of whom are not Jewish, which seeks to persuade individuals and liberal institutions to put one-tenth of their invest-

ment capital into integrated housing. Milgram, who is a former secretary of the Workers Defense League and an old-time socialist, was so encouraged by the response that he formed a corporation of his own to purchase existing apartment houses in good neighborhoods and opened them up to middle-income Negroes. He has already purchased buildings in Astoria, Forest Hills and Ocean Parkway in New York City.

Milgram, however, is not involved as he was in the thirties, when he organized anti-Fascist demonstrations, rent strikes and tenant farmers in the critical areas of social discontent and social change. Still going in the 1970's, he is dealing with the rising Negro middle class. His efforts are like the major thrust of the Jewish liberal establishment—well-intentioned and helpful to a handful of blacks, but irrelevant to the housing problems of the overwhelming majority.

Jews, unlike Negroes, are concerned about the suburbs, not the slums. Assimilation, not integration, is their dilemma. The distance between the poor blacks and the affluent Jewish liberals is so enormous that the obvious squalor of the Negro slums went unnoticed by these same Jews until the first shock wave of riots in 1964 brought it to their attention. The occasional and unsuccessful rent strikes of the twenties and thirties, which were for the most part directed against Jewish landlords, were unobserved by the outside Jewish community.

Early in the sixties a slow undercurrent of dissatisfaction began rising to the surface, and militants such as Philadelphia's Cecil Moore charged the Jewish civil rights agencies with hypocrisy. Instead of fighting for open housing, which would benefit only the few middle-class Negroes, the militants demanded that these agencies police the Jewish slumlords, a stance that would benefit the mass of the blacks.

Hurt, angered and bewildered, groups such as the Amer-

ican Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress, the B'nai B'rith and the various Jewish coordinating councils could not at first understand the militants' charges. With the increase in the tempo of the black revolution and the ever greater frequency of anti-Jewish statements from black militants, the establishment Jews have begun to question their own commitments and their priorities.

Although the Committee, the Congress and the various inter-group Jewish agencies have yet to devise a way to police Jewish slumlords, they have begun to deny their presence. In answer to a black militant statement at the United Nations World Youth Assembly, early in July of 1970, that "slum housing in Harlem was owned predominantly by Jews," Theodore Kolish, chairman of the executive board of the American Jewish Congress' New York Metropolitan Council, referred to *The Urban Dilemma,* by Professor George Sternlieb, published that spring. That study revealed that a bare majority of all buildings occupied by blacks in New York are owned by black landlords, although it made no comment on the ethnic composition of the 48 percent owned by whites. "Undoubtedly some of the slum property in New York is owned by Jews, just as some is owned by members of the many other groups that make up the population of New York," Kolish stated. "It is plain, however, that the statement that slum housing is owned predominantly by Jews is entirely unwarranted. . . . I want you to know also that the organized Jewish community of New York has been among the leaders in the fight to correct the intolerable conditions in the city's ghettos."

Increasingly, the Jewish establishment has been concerned with and involved in projects to provide decent housing for low-income ghetto families.

They are trying to establish a positive presence to compete with, even if it cannot eclipse, the negative one that now exists. It is impossible to know whether or not they

will succeed in the face of growing Negro hostility. For a time it seemed likely that the question would not have to be answered. The impetus given by the Johnson Administration to the construction of low-income housing could have driven the traditional Jewish landlord out of business, but the growing strength of the white political backlash, which has led President Nixon to cut back on these programs, will lengthen the life span of the slumlord.

In the meantime, the residue of hatred, combined with the new tendency to exhibit it, might still reap a bloody harvest.

13

THE STRIP

They broke the glass in the door. They kicked me in the leg. They handcuffed my feet together and tied my arms behind my back." Mrs. Marie Gallman, a tiny tremulous Negro woman, was speaking, and her hand shook as she pointed to a five-inch scar on her right ankle, testimony to the terrifying events of May 22, 1967.

Mr. Gallman interrupted his wife's narrative. "They threw our food and our dishes on the floor."

"I thought they were going to kill us," Mrs. Gallman concluded.

The "they" that the Gallmans so fearfully recalled were not strong-arm men or burglars or a gang of hoodlum kids. "They" were the law: two deputy sheriffs and eight policemen.

The scene was not set in Philadelphia, Mississippi, but in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The persecutors were not act-

ing as agents of a racist society but as agents of a credit and collection agency.

The Gallmans' crime was poverty. They were being punished for their desire to be part of the affluent American world advertised at thirteen-minute intervals on their television set. They sought to re-create in their small row house the American dream. In sum, they had signed a home improvements contract.

At the time, the Gallmans were told that the job of painting and weather stripping their small house at 1341 North Dover Street would cost $650. They were actually charged $1,632.58. As it turned out, Mr. Gallman, a white-haired, former sharecropper from South Carolina, who signed the contract with an X, was no match for the helpful salesman who filled in the blanks on the printed form. The extras totaled $982.58. Purportedly they were the interest and service charges on the forty-four-month installment-buying agreement.

The Gallmans had made forty-two payments, totaling $1,428.58, when Mr. Gallman, an asthmatic, became sick and was laid off his job. The balance due on the usurious document was only $205. Nonetheless, the credit company, whose sole function is the collection of debts, ordered the sheriff to break into the Dover Street house and sell the furniture at auction.

Mrs. Gallman tried to defend her possessions with a barbecue fork which was wrenched from her hand. After she was manacled, hand and foot, she was thrown on the living-room floor, kicked and beaten. When her husband tried to come to her rescue he was gassed with a chemical spray. Unconscious, he and his bleeding wife were taken first to St. Joseph's Hospital, where it became apparent they were not seriously injured, and then were carted off to a jail cell, where Mrs. Gallman lay on the floor for five hours. In the end the Gallmans were held for the grand jury and charged with aggravated assault and battery.

Their goods, valued at $2,300, were sold at auction for $190.

The case is not unique, nor are such barbarities confined to Philadelphia.

In 1965 Justice Skelly Wright of the U. S. Court of Appeals ruled that a Washington, D.C., installment seller had taken unfair advantage of an ignorant welfare mother of seven children when he sold her $1,400 worth of merchandise, including a $514 stereo phonograph, and made her sign fourteen different contracts splitting the payments among them. When the woman defaulted on the last payment of $128 for the stereo, the multiple contracts allowed the dealer to repossess everything.

A twenty-eight-year-old Negro housewife from East Harlem did not have Justice Wright to assist her in obtaining redress from a telephone order company which advertised a $100 washing machine on the radio and billed her $200 after the appliance was installed. When she refused to pay the bill and demanded the machine be removed, she lost her $50 deposit.

A Detroit resident of a gutted 12th Street house recalled seeing a newspaper ad for a $49 hi-fi set. She asked for a free demonstration and ended up with a $75 purchase. Her husband, furious at his wife's extravagance, attempted to call off the sale. The store refused and when the set broke down the merchant claimed that he no longer dealt in hi-fi equipment.

"I went," said a Newark mother of four, "to buy hamburger meat. And what I got was rotten meat and, at that, not as much as I paid for. The stuff was starting to turn green, but I didn't know it until I got home, because the way they had the stuff packaged, there was a little bit of good red stuff on the outside to fool you. By the time I found out, it was too late."

A Negro postal clerk from Boston's Roxbury found a handbill on the front door of his house that said he could get carpeting installed for $99. He called the telephone

number on the flyer, and a salesman came around. "The carpeting," said the postal clerk, "really wasn't very good and it ended up costing $820."

Seventy-seven-year-old Mary Pearson and her eighty-year-old husband, who live in Avondale, Cincinnati's black ghetto, applied for what they thought was a $1,500 loan. Their debt turned out to be $3,500. The Pearsons were taken in on a debt consolidation swindle.

"At our ages," Mrs. Pearson explained, "we couldn't get a loan and this man said he could get us the money. My daughter said not to do it, but my husband was sick—he has since died—and he wanted the money. Rather than upset him, I signed.

"Some people have pride and they pay these debts because they don't want people to know what happened. It seems we are always paying for being poor, for being old, for being colored," Mrs. Pearson said.

The Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, popularly known as the Kerner Report, stated, "Much of the violence in recent disorders has been directed at stores operated by white merchants who they believe had been charging exorbitant prices." In more cases than not, these white proprietors and credit agencies are Jewish. This fact has not been overlooked by ghetto residents.

As early as 1938, a small Chicago newspaper, titled *Dynamite,* attacked all Jews as oppressors of Negroes.

In the aftermath of the Watts riots, the black proprietor of the Hugh Gordon Book Shop ("We specialize in stuff by and about the Negro people") on devastated Central Avenue pointed to the destruction and announced, as if it were sufficient cause for the havoc: "Jews own the whole block."

It is on such major business arteries as Central Avenue —often called "the Strip" because their neon tawdriness and profusion of bars, intermingled among the high-pressure, low-quality stores, gives the impression of a nightmare

rialto—that the major confrontation between Negroes and Jews is taking place. The strip is the no-man's land of America's race war. Increasingly the Jew is becoming the personification of the hated white man because, except for the police, he is the only white man visible. Unlike the cop, the Jew is vulnerable.

Nothing has been more damaging to the Jew than the Negro's belief that the economic life of the ghetto is a colonial empire run by Jews for the purpose of oppression. In reality only a small fraction of Jewish personnel and Jewish wealth is dependent upon Negro trade. The economy of the ghetto is simply one part of the larger American economic structure, which, as a whole, lives on the exploitation of consumer power. Only the blacks have rebelled and literally made of this exploitation a burning issue.

Although ghetto grocers have been singled out for overcharging, short-changing, under-weighing, mislabeling, and selling inferior or spoiled food, their behavior has its counterpart in the world of mass-produced and mass-packaged foods.

Rich and poor alike are exploited by inflated prices. The lie is part of the American way of life. Sugar in presweetened cornflakes costs $1.07 a pound. A quart of milk in a so-called prepared milkshake comes to fifty-three cents. Packaged cold cuts average out to twenty-three cents more a pound than unpackaged slices of the same meat. Ordinary cuts such as boned chuck cost 30 percent more when re-christened rib tips. Gourmet vegetables are cooked with milk and vegetable shortening despite ads claiming the use of cream and butter. Frankfurters and corned beef are weighed down with water, and large economy loaves of bread are fluffed up with air.

The difference between these practices and the putative offenses of the Jewish grocer in Chicago's newly black West Side are quantitative rather than qualitative. Considering the calm acceptance of commercial fraud in

American society as a whole, it is not surprising that ghetto merchants are both bewildered and indignant when they are accused of dishonesty. Only style, emphasis and consequences differentiate mercantile operations in the ghetto from those outside it.

The acceptance of the adman's credo, "Buy for the sake of buying," has been destructive to the poor as well as the middle class. Half of the families in America have gone into debt in pursuit of an ever-receding "standard of living." The result is a society which spends more on cosmetics, tobacco and chewing gum than it spends on education, air pollution, public housing and public health.

But it is the low-income, newly urbanized blacks who have felt the most pernicious effects of this lust for consumption. In contrast to turn-of-the-century poor Jewish immigrants, who borrowed only for necessities and then fearfully, many Negroes go willingly into debt for luxuries. In the last half of the twentieth century, all the old values of frugality have been overturned by the endless flagellations of the mass media. Between 1935 and 1965 the population increased by only 18 percent, while installment buying sky-rocketed 130 percent. Fifty-five percent of all Americans, white and black, who earn as much as $6,000 per year buy furniture on the installment plan, and eight out of ten of the nation's poorest families owe money on household purchases. In fact, the poorer the family the less likely it is to delay the gratification that comes from buying.

These overstimulated and underfinanced consumers demand credit. The demand has inflated the price to the point where the simple supplying of credit has become in itself a profitable business. Surveys by the National Retail Furniture Association reveal that the average furniture store realizes more profit from the extension of credit than from the sale of furniture. As a result, some of the largest manufacturers and merchandisers have branched out into the credit business. Conversely, loan companies, in an at-

tempt to secure a steady market of credit paper, have gone into the retail outlet business.

Annual interest rates on installment contracts run as high as 22 percent per year in and out of the ghetto. The cumulative interest on the Gallmans' home improvement contract would have doubled the cost of the work even if the job had been done by a "respectable operator."

Normal carrying costs on many downtown department stores' revolving charge accounts come to 30 percent per year. A revolving account is open-ended; in return for paying only a portion of the accumulated indebtedness per month, usually one-sixth, the customer is allowed to continue charging goods. For this privilege he pays interest. The interest is on a par with what ghetto residents often pay in so-called exploitive lay-away plans. The difference is frequently that ghetto contracts have a considerably longer term than those granted outside the ghetto. Time greatly increases cost; each additional year can add as much as 33 percent onto interest charges.

Negroes are hooked on credit for demographic as well as economic and cultural reasons. The most avid consumers in America are the young. The Negro population, for a variety of reasons that includes higher birth rates and earlier deaths, is younger than the general population.

More vulnerable to the pressures toward conformity, the transplanted rural black has before him the example of a lavishly extravagant society on a spending spree. Stimulated by the images on his home screen (95 percent of slum-bound Negroes have TV sets), he attempts through consumption to simulate, at least in his fantasies, the life he sees on television.

Columbia University sociologist David Caplovitz used the concept "compensatory consumption" to explain certain kinds of consumer behavior. As he points out, Negroes, doubly disadvantaged by poverty and prejudice, have turned to buying as an emotional outlet to a greater extent than have poor whites. Even without this added

psychological motivation, it would have been miraculous if the debt-ridden Southern sharecropper had turned out to be other than a debt-ridden consumer in the promised land of the urban North.

The lay-away plan and the installment contract seem to the former tenant farmer mere recapitulations of his earlier experiences with the country store and the white landowner. The furniture-store canvasser or the door-to-door notions salesman does not seem, even though he frequently is, different in kind from the itinerant Southern peddler immortalized by William Faulkner in his character Ratliff, the sewing machine salesman of *The Hamlet*.

Part and parcel of what Caplovitz labeled "an urban sharecropper system" is the door-to-door credit salesman. During the early years of this century, when the great European emigrations were inundating America, peddlers thrived in the ethnic enclaves of the cities. Unlike those earlier times, there are now two kinds of door-to-door sellers: the traditional peddlers, who depend upon their personal nexus of relationships within the ghetto to make repeated sales and who are frequently on the payroll of local merchants; and the transient artists, who peddle expensive durables such as vacuum cleaners or encyclopedias. It is the latter who are responsible for the most outrageous exploitation and who, unlike the regular neighborhood canvassers, employ written installment contracts.

Upon signing such a contract the customer is given a coupon book and is expected to mail in monthly payments. Unbeknown to the customer, these payments do not go to a store but to a finance firm such as Mid-Penn Discount Company, which undertakes to vigorously enforce the contract's payment terms. In either case the cost of door-to-door service is high. Thirty to 50 percent is added to the final price of appliances and furniture. Notions, jewelry and religious pictures can be had at five or

six times the price they can be bought for at the store around the corner. Aiding and abetting the ghetto dwellers' desire to buy are bait advertisements and the concomitant switch sale of merchandise. Although these tactics are not unknown in white America, they are a prime technique in ghetto merchandising. The Reverend William Gray of Bright Hope Baptist Church, one of the largest Negro congregations in Philadelphia, exclaimed in irritation, "I don't know how many times I've heard it—that some parishioner will tell me that she saw a television set advertised on sale for $120 and ended up buying a color set for $700. I know that this happens to whites, too, but it is unconscionable to take advantage of Negroes this way. So many of them are defenseless because they are ignorant and ill-educated, and they, more than whites, do not understand what is happening to them."

Re-enforcing the black man's feeling that he lives in a colony is the inability of many Negroes to shop outside their own neighborhoods. Some are geographically limited because they do not own automobiles and lack the carfare for shopping excursions. Others are neurotically fearful of leaving their "turf." Even without these limitations poor Negroes are unable to shop at large, established national and local retail firms because they have little cash and bad credit ratings. One of the objectives of the National Welfare Rights Organization, a kind of union for relief recipients, is to force chain stores and large department stores to give them credit.

In an F.T.C. study in Washington, D.C., it was discovered that the median annual income of the ghetto customer is $4,200. A third of the buyers in that sample earned less than $3,600 a year, 6 percent were on relief, and 76 percent were menial laborers. Ninety-two percent of the sales of appliances and furniture were made on time. The exigencies of such a trade have resulted in a class of merchants who specialize in flexible prices and instant credit to cover the high cost of doing business in

the slums, where insurance is scarce or rates exorbitant and where pilfering is a significant expense. The result, to quote Caplovitz, is "that the poor always pay more."

Pricing is a special art in the low-income market. Almost no store in Harlem, Williamsburg, North Philadelphia, Avondale, the Central Ward and Roxbury has a single price list. Items are untagged; the charge is dependent on the customer. The poorer the credit risk the higher the price tag, and a Negro is almost always considered a poorer risk than a white, even when both are in similar circumstances. In changing or mixed neighborhoods such as those on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, the merchants and peddlers who specialize in personal credit and individualized prices act on the premise that newer immigrants are greater risks and that the darker the customer the worse his credit.

The captive nature of the ghetto market not only makes multiple price lists possible but it also allows for high mark-ups on low-quality goods. According to Paul Dixon, former chairman of the F.T.C., an item whose wholesale price is $100 would retail for $165 in a general merchandise store and for $250 in the Washington ghetto. The premium for credit—52 percent of the cost. Carrying charges in the ghetto have been known to go as high as 81 percent. In Akron, Ohio, a color television set listed at $699 cost $1,399 on the installment plan. Ghetto merchants regularly charge between two and five times the usual price for ordinary household equipment.

Despite high prices, long terms and the financial instability of the trade, the ghetto merchant rightly expects a majority of his customers to pay. Anticipating that some payments will be missed, he traditionally operates on the basis of a fifteen- or eighteen-month year with interest charges adjusted accordingly. This scheme penalizes the reliable customer but keeps the shopkeeper's books bal-

When the customer comes to the store to pay, the merchant gets a chance to sell other items to the customer. The result is a pattern of continued indebtedness.

To ensure against losses, the merchant frequently sells his longest-term and most expensive contracts at a 40 percent discount to a collection firm. In taking over these contracts, the factoring houses do not assume any responsibility for the merchandise sold. The storekeeper, having been assured of a decent profit long before the customer has finished his payments, washes his hands of the sale.

This system gives rise to the anonymous merchant. With the takeover of the contract by a finance company, the customer can find no one who can be held accountable for merchandise. Unlike the merchants, the collectors, who are both physically and emotionally removed from the ghetto, are responsible for outrages such as the Gallmans experienced. Deaf to cries of mercy, legally unfettered by guarantees, these agencies' sole business is the collection of money.

Complicating matters for the ghetto customer is the short-term store. Set up for a brief period of time to unload particular items such as freezers, stereo-phonograph sets or vacuum cleaners, these short-term operations are frequently financed by a credit agency. Once the lot of merchandise is sold out, they go out of business. Thirty- or ninety-day guarantees, although legally binding, cannot be enforced against closed shops.

When the ghetto customer fails to live up to his obligation to pay, however, the creditor is able to utilize the law to enforce his rights. Unaided, no consumer can withstand the pressures of the credit-collection system. Poverty-stricken to begin with, the black victim can afford neither a lawyer nor the legal costs to fight for his rights, even if he knows what his rights are.

Because credit is the life-blood of America's economy, even the disreputable salesmen have the ultimate sanction of the nation's largest banks and finance companies.

A case in point is the late Commonwealth Finance Corporation of Philadelphia, which listed as its president Albert Gelber, a prominent Jewish lawyer, civic leader and author (he wrote a best-selling biography of Howard Hughes called *The Bashful Billionaire*). Commonwealth specialized in financing one-shot companies such as Quaker Sew-Vac, which sold used wringer-type clothes washers by mail order. The gimmick was that the machines were represented as being both new and electric. To add injury to insult, the customer was quoted a price of $195.50 and ended up paying $300 after putting down a $10 deposit and making monthly contributions of $11.95.

By the time the housewives realized they had been cheated, Quaker Sew-Vac had gone out of business. When angry customers (most of whom were black) refused to continue payments, they received notices that all of their furniture and household goods would be sold at a public auction.

In addition, Commonwealth bought long-term credit contracts from questionable food-freezer plans, sleazy furniture outlets, and shaky companies handling credit created out of retail outlets along Columbia Avenue, the main business artery of Philadelphia's black slum. In turn, Commonwealth was financed by such old-line, respectable institutions as the First Pennsylvania Banking & Trust Company and the Girard Trust Bank as well as national banking giants like Exchange National of Chicago and First National of Washington, D.C.

Commonwealth, like the questionable operations they financed, was run by first- and second-generation Jews from Eastern Europe. However, some of the first families of America sit on the boards of the banks that backstopped Commonwealth.

The laws enforcing contracts handled by Commonwealth and similar finance agencies are archaic and weighted against the debtor. Nowhere are there legal sanctions against add-on clauses to installment agreements,

making previous purchases, even though paid for, security for new purchases. In New York state and in nineteen other states, installment buyers frequently find their salaries garnished for consumed debts. In Pennsylvania, time purchasers discover to their sorrow that their contracts include "a confession of judgment" clause, which gives away the purchasers' right to a court defense. The result of the execution of these "judgment clauses" is that the holder of the contract can set up a sheriff sale in which consumers like the Gallmans lose all their household furnishings. In some cases the stores buy back their own merchandise; in other cases second-hand dealers are major purchasers.

In Philadelphia there are 250 sheriff sales a week—13,000 per year. These judgments can be, and are, frequently exercised without respect to the fact that goods sold in the original contract were inferior, do not work, or cost more than the customer understood that they would cost.

As ubiquitous as the sheriff sale, though not as emotionally devastating to the debtor, is the act of repossession. One of the results of repossession is the creation of a used-goods market. In Washington, D.C., ghetto stores have been discovered which add so many hidden charges to the price of a set of furniture that stores are able to repossess and resell the same item a number of times. In one instance a single set of furniture in one of these stores had a dozen different owners.

In Chicago, New York, Baltimore and Los Angeles there are so many repossessions that businesses have been formed just to handle the trade.

No facet of ghetto life causes more long-lasting bitterness than the sheriff sale and repossession. Although the prospect of repossession, garnishment or a sheriff sale causes grave anxiety, one in every five ghetto residents has either had his salary garnished, his goods sold or repossessed, or has been threatened with one or more of these

actions. The extended result of such financial problems is often eviction or forced residential relocation.

Although the legislative framework supporting the credit economy applies equally, in theory, to whites and blacks, rich and poor, in practice it falls most heavily on poor blacks. In the nation's capital, for example, slum retailers specializing in credit sales of furniture and appliances use the courts in one out of every eleven sales. In contrast, the courts were employed by District of Columbia department stores in only one out of every 14,500 sales. Close to half of the Negro families in the capital's slums believe they have been victimized by laws protecting creditors, and 70 percent of those who buy on credit believe they have been exploited by shopkeepers.

The major adjunct of the credit business is the liquor business. Of all the enterprises that have exploited the poor, none has encouraged more atrocious social fallout than the liquor trade, which includes alcoholism, sexual promiscuity, family instability, violence, brutality and the improvident use of limited funds. Despite state restrictions guarding this traffic, taprooms abound in the ghetto. They not only encourage alcoholism—the disease of the poor, with its attendant adverse effect on family stability—but are criminal hangouts, frequently serving as headquarters for illegal activities such as gambling, prostitution and the sale of narcotics. They set an example of open illegality, of political and police corruption.

In the jargon of the trade, anyone who wants to buy a taproom is a "fish." The amount he must pay to the loan companies who specialize in financing these high-risk operations is the "nut." "A fish who finds the nut too much will try to persuade a numbers writer or even a pickup man to operate out of his place," a Philadelphia police officer explained. The additional bar business that a writer can bring in can be worth fifty dollars a day. "The fish in trouble will set up drinks for women to attract male customers. He doesn't refuse to serve a customer who has had

too much to drink. And he's not going to take too hard a look at the people who come into his place, as long as they are buying."

The fish is usually in trouble because buying a taproom is so expensive. Banks and regular loan companies will not finance him, nor are they able to get him a license—that is the function of taproom finance specialists, who usually charge upward of 30 percent of the amount borrowed just for interest, legal and "finder" fees.

To insure himself against default, the lender sets up a taproom corporation. With the exception of the owner, the board of directors are members of the finance company. If and when the "tappy" defaults on his weekly or monthly payments, he is kicked unceremoniously off the board, and all claim to proprietorship vanishes. To facilitate these changeovers the presumptive barkeep is frequently forced to sign an undated resignation, an assignment of all stock in the corporation to the finance company, and a number of checks drawn in advance on the corporation to meet regular payments, even before he receives the loan which is to launch him on his career as a publican. At the time the lender wishes to reclaim the bar, he simply fills in the date on the resignation and the stock transfers.

It is not unusual to find a pattern of interlocking corporate ownership of strip bars. Nor is it odd to find that the corporate title of a bar at one location changes five or six times within two or three years. In reality the putative Negro owner is very frequently only a short-term, high-priced renter.

To a large extent the bar financiers are Jews—engaged as they were in Europe and as they are in America in credit factoring and moneylending to marginal enterprises and bad-risk customers. The would-be Negro publicans are "fish" that even racket-bred Italian loan sharks are wary of. The only capital willing to underwrite them is Jewish.

The liquor trade horrifies and infuriates middle-class blacks, frustrating their best efforts to upgrade their neighborhoods, just as the credit game with its attendant evils of repossession and garnishment enrages lower-class blacks. The object of this fury and frustration is the Jew, who is visible primarily as merchant, moneylender or bar owner, but who is seen increasingly just as Jew.

Jewish economic domination of the ghetto has its roots in the Jewish millennial experience in Europe, a remnant of which can still be dramatically viewed in Williamsburg, that section of New York City that was once the province of the Hasidim. Scurrying down Division Street in the shadow of the Williamsburg Bridge, bearded men with long curly forelocks can still be seen, their thin bodies encased in long black gabardine coats, their pale faces shielded by wide-brimmed beaver hats trimmed with fur, in imitation of seventeenth-century Polish aristocrats. These men, fearful of the sudden wrath of the forces of evil, which according to ancient superstition attacks the bared heads of the impious, seldom go hatless either on the street, in their homes or in the Yeshiva Torah Vo-daath, where they spend their days studying the ancient texts of the Hebrews and chanting the mournful prayers that had once been addressed to the tribal desert god, Yahveh. Brushing alongside them are Negroes in tight chinos and sunglasses, sporting Afro hairdos, beards and beads.

Walking down the steps from the elevated station to Division Street is like walking in parallel time. In this little corner of New York has been re-created the sights, sounds and smells—if not the oppressions—of old Warsaw, along with the vistas, noises and odors of the twentieth-century black ghetto. Intermingled with the Hebrew shop signs are neon tubes advertising barbecued chicken, hogjaws and chitlings.

The Hasids first came to Brooklyn in 1903 over the newly constructed Williamsburg Bridge, along with

swarms of other immigrant Eastern European Jews, Italians, Poles and Irishmen. To cater to the needs and tastes of these immigrants, there soon appeared a variety of small merchants and peddlers. In particular, the clannish Hasids needed clothing as well as kosher butchers, sellers of sacramental wines, bakers and purveyors of the ingredients that make up the Jewish cuisine. Of necessity these traders were Jews, as were the knife grinders, the dealers in second-hand clothes, and the book sellers. Their transactions were conducted entirely in Yiddish, the lingua franca of the Eastern European immigrant.

Despite its predominantly Jewish population, Williamsburg in the 1930's was one of New York's worst poverty pockets. In 1938 six of its blocks were bulldozed to make way for Brooklyn's first public housing project.

"A lot of kids I grew up with were on welfare," Murray Friedman, the Williamsburg-reared executive director of the Pennsylvania American Jewish Committee, reminisced. "Sometimes I think that my kids, growing up in a nice clean Jewish suburb, are culturally deprived. Williamsburg was a very stimulating place then. It was, of course, a fantastic time of great hope and expectation.

"The big difference between the Williamsburg of my boyhood and the Williamsburg of today is the attitude of the residents. Today the young blacks are hopeless and angry. The area was always full of poor people, but we Jews all knew that we would grow up and make money and move away—and we did. The Negroes who took, and are taking, our places have no such faith. Physically, the neighborhood doesn't look much different. It always looked like a slum. Now it is a slum.

"The last time I was in Williamsburg was in 1965. I went there to help my mother move. I remember being struck that day by the number of Negroes I saw shopping on Havemeyer Street. There had been no Negroes in the neighborhood when I was growing up. Then I started to look closely at the stores. I had the distinct impression

that most of the small places which were increasingly being patronized by Negroes were run by a different group of Jews than those I knew as a kid. For one thing, they were younger than the old shopkeepers who, if still alive, would have been in their seventies and eighties. I don't think they handed on these places to their children either, almost all of whom had gone to college. The shopkeepers seemed to me to be made up largely of post–World War II refugees.

"I suppose that they are now considered exploiting merchants, or soon will be when the neighborhood becomes all Negro. And I wouldn't want to argue whether they are or not or whether they ever will be. I know that when I was growing up we never looked on the merchants as exploiters. For the most part, the people who ran those stores were our neighbors. We could see that they didn't have a lot of money. Besides, they wouldn't have dared to cheat us. We would have known and raised so much noise it would have ruined their business.

"By the same token, we didn't steal from those stores. If we had gotten caught we would have really gotten it from our mothers and fathers. The merchants weren't outsiders. They were neighbors. When we stole we went over to Broadway to Woolworth's." Friedman paused to reflect. "I guess that was what we viewed as the establishment. Now the black kids look on the Jewish merchants the way we looked on Woolworth's.

"The other thing that I think we ought to keep in mind is that the greatest abuses in the ghetto are those connected with credit buying. Well, my family didn't buy on credit and nobody that I knew did. We knew that the accumulation of debt would make the accumulation of capital impossible. Without capital the poor man cannot hope to go into business for himself with a stand, a pushcart or a peddler's pack, let alone expand any small business that he might already have."

What Murray Friedman described as happening now

in Williamsburg has already occurred in Newark's Central Ward, in Harlem, in North Philadelphia, in Roxbury, Hough, Avondale and on Chicago's West Side. While the sons and daughters of the pious Hasids flee into American life beyond the invisible barriers marked by Meekers Avenue in the north and Flushing Avenue in the south, or move into the meadows of New Jersey to build a new kibbutz, the businessmen who served them remain behind to service their black successors, adjusting their wares, their advertisements and their practices to suit the habits and foibles of their new clientele.

The Hebrew signs are coming down. The buyers are offering chitlings in place of chopped liver. Where the merchants are too old or too frightened to make the necessary changes, their places are taken not by Negroes but by other Jews more knowledgeable in the ways of dealing in the poor-black market.

The Jews did not come to this trade unprepared. Two thousand years of selective adaptation made them the natural servicers of the new ghetto. Their apprenticeship began in A.D. 70, after the destruction by Rome of the kingdom of Judea and the scattering of its citizens throughout the Roman provinces of the Near East and Europe. Settling in their own quasi-democratic communities, the Jews continued to govern their lives by the rules that had been evolved in Palestine. The uniformity of these laws gave them, in those early days, a mercantile advantage. During the time of Charlemagne and Harun al-Rashid, Hebrew became the main language of commerce and Jews the middlemen in a traffic that saw the exchange of Eastern luxuries, such as incense, spices and carved ivory, for Western slaves.

In medieval society Jews were burghers whose job was to control economic life. Although excluded from political leadership by birth, they were frequently fiscal agents and tax collectors for the ruling powers. They were in fact the West's first capitalists and as such enjoyed a special rela-

tionship with their governors who entrusted their cash to them for investment in the business of usury, which was then forbidden to Christians. As investors, the early kings of Europe were vitally interested in this trade, which reaped annual interest rates of 33.3–43 percent. In fact, Jewish usury served as a sort of tax collecting mechanism for the weak medieval states, with the Jews in turn being subject to a wide variety of imposts, fines and tallies.

They paid dearly, however, for their privileges. As agents of kings and high church officials, they earned the enmity of the nobility and lower clergy. As bankers and merchants they incited the jealousy of incipient Christian rivals, and as tax collectors they earned the hatred of the masses. Physically defenseless, Jews proved to be the perfect target for the enemies of the status quo. Popular uprisings frequently ended in the murder of Jews rather than the reform of repressive institutions. Even the Crusades resulted in the slaughter of a far larger number of European Jews than Muslims.

The revival by the Lateran Council in 1215 of the old Theodosian Code of A.D. 438, which had barred Jews from all civil and military functions, only put the official seal of approval on widespread anti-Semitism. The code, originally formulated by the Eastern Roman Emperor Theodosius after an unsuccessful effort to convert the Jews, became a punitive economic weapon eight hundred years later, upon its incorporation into canon law.

As a result, Jews were residentially segregated, socially ostracized, and forbidden to own land. Families that had been artisans since antiquity were driven from their trades. The discreet retraction of royal and clerical favor combined with increased violence and lawlessness broke the Jewish monopoly on the Oriental trade. Their hegemony over high finance was ended by the Lombards as early as the thirteenth century. And anti-Semitism became the common rallying ground of discontented peasants,

angry noblemen, religious reformers, and the rising class of Christian burghers.

The Holy War in Spain in 1391, which had as its target tyrannical royal power, also sought the elimination of Jews from the country. The peasants revolting in Alsace in 1525 bluntly demanded, "Chastise the clerics and the Jews. Sack the Jews and the clerics." The infamous Chilmnicki pogrom in 1646 started out as a war against the oppressive Polish Catholic overlords of the Russian Orthodox Ukraine. It ended in a blood bath for the Jews who collected the surplice fees on Polish births, baptisms, weddings and funerals.

And so it happened that as Jewish fortunes declined, their unpopularity increased. Stripped of economic usefulness, they were expelled by their former protectors from England, the city states of Italy, Spain and the Germanies in efforts to forestall further social unrest and appease mob anger. Until, at last, the Jews ended up in the backwaters of Russia, Poland, Rumania and Hungary as tax collectors, small-time merchants, peddlers, tavern keepers and moneylenders. There, in Eastern Europe, they had centuries to learn all the skills of trading with a depressed and poverty-stricken clientele.

Pitiful and vulnerable as their position was, it was envied by the illiterate, superstitious and hopelessly degraded peasantry to whom they catered. The charges made against them have, on re-examination, a frighteningly familiar ring. "You Jews, you can cheat the devil," thundered Taras Bulba, the Cossack hero of Gogol's classic story.

The role of those Jews in the economic structure of Eastern Europe is similar to the niche occupied by Jews in the black slums of America. Commenting on the successes of the Jews in exploiting the impoverished markets of Eastern Europe and the black depressed markets of America, Edward Lewis Wallant, in his remarkable novel *The Pawnbroker,* had his hero Sol Nazerman, the Nazi-

refugee Harlem moneylender, say, "You begin with several thousand years during which you have nothing except a great bearded legend to sustain you and convince you there is something special about you, even in your poverty. But this little brain. This is the real key. With it, you obtain a small piece of cloth—wool, silk, cotton—it doesn't matter. You take the cloth and you cut it into two pieces and sell it for a penny or two more than you paid for the one piece of cloth; with this money, then, you buy a slightly larger piece of cloth, which perhaps you cut into three pieces and sell for three pennies' profit. You must never succumb to buying an extra piece of bread at this point, or a luxury like a toy for your child. Immediately you must go out and buy a still larger cloth, or two larger cloths, and repeat the process. And so you continue until there is no longer any temptation to dig in the earth and grow food, no longer any desire to look at the limitless land which is in your name. You repeat the process over and over and over for approximately twenty centuries, then you have a mercantile heritage."

Picking up the fictional thread and re-enforcing it with the stitchings of reality, Samuel Bortnik, sole proprietor of Bortnik's Department Store at 2212–16 South Street in Philadelphia, proudly told his story between interruptions to wait on Negro customers.

"My father left Russia right after the First World War. He was nineteen or twenty. He went to Argentina and became a peddler. He didn't like it there because so many of the Jews came from Germany and looked down on him. So, in 1919 he came to the United States, landing in Philadelphia. As soon as he got off the boat he made his way to a Jewish community at 3rd and Queen streets. I think he had relatives there. If not, he had *landsleit,* people who came from the same village in Russia. Two weeks after he arrived, a marriage was arranged for him by the local *shadchen,* the marriage broker, who usually got a commission from the bride's family for making such arrange-

ments. I'm not sure why my father was considered such a good catch—he didn't have a penny to his name and my mother had a dowry of three hundred dollars. I guess it was because she was two or three years older than he was. Twenty-three and you were an old maid in those days.

"At any rate, my father bought a clothing stand with the three hundred dollars and set himself up in business at 3rd and Queen. With the money he made from the stand, he rented this building. We lived in an apartment above the store. Unlike 3rd and Queen, this was never a Jewish neighborhood except for the merchants and their families, who lived on top of the stores. Our customers were Irish and Italian then. Now they are all colored."

Pointing to a vacant lot across the street from his store, Sam Bortnik said nostalgically, "There used to be a movie house there. The last show let out at eleven o'clock at night. My father used to stay open until eleven-fifteen to catch the people coming out so that he would sell an extra pair of socks for seven cents. He opened the store at 7 A.M. seven days a week. I don't open until nine, but I'm open every day, too.

"Everything my father made, he put back into the business or he used it to buy real estate. First, he bought the building with the store where we lived. Then he bought the building next door and joined the two together to enlarge the store. Next he bought the property down the street and he rented out the top floors of the building as apartments. But he continued to live above the original store until he died a couple of years ago."

Bortnik, who implied that he clears more on the apartments than he does on his store, which carries every conceivable category of clothing, moved away from South Street when he got married. He now lives in a second-generation Jewish neighborhood in the most resolutely white section of the city.

"We worked hard, we Jews. We educated our children. We built our own businesses. We did it all by ourselves

and all we ask is to be left alone." He nodded his head in the direction of one of his Negro clerks, Robert Webster, known as Toddy, who sports a goatee and was then waiting on a customer. "If they'd do the same, they would be all right."

Then, realizing how he sounded, Bortnik decided to fully recognize the import of his words. "I guess you could say that I'm some kind of Jewish fascist or Jewish nationalist. I used to be a radical and a real Red, now I'm not even interested in being liberal.

"Of course in 1938 and 1939, anybody young with any decent kind of instincts was Pink if not Red. We Russian Jews came by it naturally because communism and socialism seemed to Jews in Russia the only way to stop the pogroms. I was a naïve kid. I thought you could change the world. I wasn't going to be a shopkeeper like my father. So I went to college. But I got thrown out in my second year for being a Red. They weren't tolerant then the way they are now. They threw you out just for picketing. Now they don't do anything to the kids even after they lock up the dean. I can't say I don't sympathize with these kids. They are protesting a world they never made, just the way we did. The trouble is that it doesn't matter.

"I remember a fellow named Eddie O'Brien. He was really a nice guy. He was the head of the Young Communist League that I belonged to. We used to meet at 40th & Girard Avenue. It's all colored there now, but then it was the heart of a working-class Jewish neighborhood. It was in late August of 1939. Hitler and Stalin had just signed a nonaggression treaty. I stood up at the meeting and said we should denounce the treaty.

"Eddie slammed his fist down on the table. He was a big guy and it had quite an impact. Then he said, 'Damn it, you Jews are all alike.'

"I got up and answered, 'You're right Eddie, we are all alike because you guys make us that way,' and I walked out.

"From then on I decided I was going to stick with my own. That incident made a good Jew out of me. Before Eddie said that, I had been an atheist."

Again Sam Bortnik eyed his black salesman. "It's all right to help them, but mainly you got to help yourself. The Jews have to look out for themselves because if they don't, no one else will. That's what I tell my son. He's getting a master's degree in social work. That's what the colored have to learn.

"I pay Toddy a hundred and twenty-five dollars a week. Sometimes that's more than I take out of the store. The other fella," he said, pointing to a second young Negro clerk, "gets seventy dollars a week. I figure you have to pay them well so they won't steal from you." He shrugged his shoulders. "But, who knows, maybe they steal anyway." Then his face brightened. "I'll tell you one thing about Toddy, the colored people come to him and they want him to help them steal. They say we're colored and you're colored so you should help us. He says no. Because he knows they would be stealing from him, too, because he has to make his living from this store. So they call him Toddy, the dirty Jew, because he won't let them steal."

Bortnik, who at forty-nine is a tall, husky, handsome man with blue eyes and graying hair, is thinking about his future. "I'd like to get out of this business. I'm going to school at nights. I'm taking marketing. If I could I'd sell out to Toddy—he's been with me for thirteen years. The city is trying to help us work out a deal."

He surveyed the store, a funny half-smile on his lips. "Now if I sell this place to Toddy, do you think he'll work like I do. Do you think he'll keep open seven days a week." His tone darkened. "Look at this place. Look how sloppy it is. The stock's not in place. You can't find things. There's thousands of dollars' worth of merchandise that I can't lay my hands on lying around. If I can't find it, I can't sell it. That's a dead loss. I keep telling them"—he wagged his head in the direction of his Negro clerks—"you've got

to keep order. You've got to straighten things up. They don't give a damn. I say, Toddy, you got to be a Jew, whether you want to be or not, if you want to make out in this business." Toddy just laughs and says, "Sam, once a nigger, always a nigger." If the sale should go through, Toddy undoubtedly won't do business in Sam Bortnik's way.

Although historians and archaeologists are now beginning to uncover and publicize for the first time in the white world the existence of great black civilizations in Africa, all memory of cultures such as that of the kingdom of Benin was erased in black American minds by slavery. The "peculiar institution" made it impossible for first-generation slaves to transmit any of their skills to their indentured descendants.

As early as 1899 W. E. B. Du Bois, in his classic study *The Philadelphia Negro,* wrote of black mercantile and employment disabilities:

> The competition in a large city is fierce, and it is difficult for any poor people to succeed. The Negro, however, has two special difficulties: his training and his tradition as a slave and freedman has not been such as make the average of the race as efficient and reliable workmen as the average native American or as many foreign immigrants. The Negro is, as a rule, willing, honest, and good natured; but he is also, as a rule, careless, unreliable, and unsteady. This is without doubt to be expected in a people who for generations have been trained to shirk work.

Emerging from slavery, Negroes had no experience with money and had no occasion to develop skills in planning and foresight, which even the smallest business requires. In this respect the European peasant, whose physical standard of living may have been as low as a slave's, was better off because he had to market his produce and manage a small stock of money and goods.

An equally important factor in the Negro's inability to develop a commercial base has been his failure to develop a pattern of saving. The poor may have had nothing to save, but even those better off have always turned their earnings into consumption.

"You are," Elijah Muhammad said, castigating a Harlem crowd in the early 1960's, "a sporty people. . . . You look fine and well dressed, but you haven't anything. You spend more than your rich white master! You spend your paycheck back for sport! And your masters wait for the money they just gave you to come back home."

That the harsh American brand of slavery is the ultimate cause of Negro business disability can be seen when the mercantile history of West Indian Negro immigrants is contrasted with that of Southern Negro newcomers. The West Indians characteristically stress education, frugality, hard work and investment, and only these Negroes as a group have shown a record of business success.

Negro business problems are complicated by the problem of Negro male identity. Discrimination and intimidation have deadened the Negro man's sense of natural aggressiveness and so imperiled his manhood as to make it impossible for him to take the kind of jobs that Jewish men once took, such as those in the clothing industry, which lead to opportunities for entrepreneurship. In addition, Negroes have no special ethnic needs. Unlike Jews, they bring with them no foreign culture. Their diet is American, as are their clothes and habits. No specialized shops are required to cater to them, no particular language abilities demanded to serve them.

In fact, the one resource needed by blacks—credit—is usually unavailable to them, while it is readily available to Jews. In contrast to the Jews, whose banking operations were always tied to the profit motive, the Freedman's Bank and the True Reform Bank—the only two large Negro lending agencies—were thought of as institutions which would "advance the race." Since they were opened in Re-

construction days as places where Negro health and burial societies could safely deposit their dues, Negro leaders soon came to view their banks as educational institutions. They believed that their very existence would teach Negroes thrift. Through saving, these leaders reasoned, Negroes could emulate the Yankee ideal of frugality. The mass of blacks, however, preferred to imitate the consumption habits of the plantation aristocracy. Dependent solely on erratic black savings, eager to capitalize almost any venture, it is not surprising that both banking institutions failed: the Freedman's Bank in the aftermath of the panic of 1873; and the Reform Bank during the Great Depression. With their demise, Negroes lost for thirty vital years almost all chance at obtaining credit.

Until very recently, white institutions, public and private, were unwilling to aid black businessmen. Eugene P. Foley, of the Federal Small Business Administration, ruefully conceded in August 1964, during the renewal of big-city black riots, "I am ashamed to admit that my agency has made only seven loans to Negroes in the last six months." This confession led to a more liberal federal policy and at least a verbal commitment to help finance Negro enterprises by leading bankers across the country. President Nixon, in his turn, has gone through the motions of making the creation of black capitalism a goal of his administration. To date, however, there have been more words than dollars expended.

The great resource of other immigrant groups—the family—was denied Negroes by the still-felt trauma of slavery. The Jewish phenomenon of the clan enterprise—a father and sons, or bands of brothers—is unknown among blacks. In an era that sees the increasing breakdown not only of the extended family but of the nuclear one as well, it is unlikely that the black man will ever be able to recreate on this continent a blood-bound community structure.

Thus, unable to obtain either investment or working

capital from public, private or family sources, the blacks have so far been doomed to be wage earners. While more than half of the Jews earn their livings in merchandising and financing, less than three out of every hundred Negroes are entrepreneurs. For it was small businesses that provided the bridge upon which the immigrants walked from poverty to relative affluence. Serving as training schools in credit, finance and politics, their presence benefited not only the proprietor but the whole community. In the ghetto, as in the ethnic enclaves of the past, small businesses are the base of power. They create both jobs and skills. Until very recently the jobs and the skills derived from them went not to the blacks but to the Jews; so did the power. Negroes, unable to create a natural leadership, looked longingly to the jobs.

The Harlem riot of 1935 grew largely out of Jewish refusal to hire blacks, as did the Chicago boycott of 1938

mix of contempt and benevolence toward his employees has woven a strangely textured relationship. It has produced mutual dependence and mutual dislike not dissimilar in feeling to the bond which so frequently exists between the Jewish housewife and her *"shvartzer"* maid.

On the one hand, the shopkeeper judges his Negro assistant by ideal Jewish standards, and sadly gives him failing grades; on the other hand, he views his helper as an essentially dumb domestic servant. The servant, in turn, knowing that he can never really win approval, articulates anti-Semitic stereotype phrases just out of earshot of his master. The continuous misconceptions have ended in a hardening of Jewish attitudes and an increase in the black man's desire to revolt against what he considers to be his Jewish overlord.

Negro leadership, from the lightest of Uncle Toms to the darkest of black militants, from Washington to Garvey, from Whitney Young to Ron Karenga, understands these feelings and has consistently emphasized the importance of a Negro ethnic commercial base. Yet the truth is that Negro business is less significant in 1970 than it was in 1898. Even those few fields which black men once dominated, such as catering, have been taken over by the white man. The only important forms of black business are cosmetics, barber shops, and undertaking parlors. The Negro presence in even these limited personal areas is due less to Negro business acumen or Negro sensitivities than it is to white disinterest in the trade.

The harsh reality of the ghetto is that it is not an economically viable place. It feeds on itself. Black businesses are geared toward the satisfaction of personal needs and are marginal to the economy of the city as a whole. There are few large Negro enterprises and the small ones are of questionable stability. Although an increasing percentage of Negro income is spent in Negro-owned establishments, it is still a very small amount. Even in Harlem, the single

largest department store is owned by whites and all but one of the banks are branches of white-owned downtown establishments.

Complicating the reality of failure is the myth of success. There has been a tremendous push by the Negro press and the black bourgeoisie to create a black commercial class by simple acts of faith. The myth first took shape in the 1890's at the time the legal structure for segregation was being erected and the hope of Negroes for equality being crushed. It was the product of the small group of intellectuals who orbited around Booker T. Washington. Accepting racial segregation as inevitable, these educators sought to find a solution to the race problem in business success.

"Negro capital," said John Hope, president of Atlanta University in 1898, "will have to give an opportunity to Negro workmen who will be crowded out by white competition." He added, "The mass of Negroes must learn to patronize business enterprises conducted by their own race even at some slight disadvantage. We must cooperate or we are lost. Ten million people who join in intelligent self-help can never be long ignored or mistreated."

In 1900 the myth was institutionalized by Booker T. Washington when he organized the National Business League. Its cardinal article of faith was that "the power of business enterprise and money would wipe out racial prejudice." The League was like no other business association in America. It was evangelical. Its zeal was religious and its high priests were professional men, not businessmen. Under the influence of the near-religious exhortations of its leaders, the participants in these revival meetings began to believe that a real Negro business class existed. Fanciful stories of Negroes as millionaires were circulated and the whole fantasy of the "separate economies" came to be accepted.

First conservatives, then radicals, proposed that Negroes build manufacturing plants, create banks and open stores.

These operations were to be financed at first out of Negro savings and to be maintained and expanded by total Negro patronage. They would not only create capital but would give employment to Negro workers.

Embellishing the basic utopian invention were a wide variety of crackpot schemes. In Washington, D.C., in the 1920's, it was proposed that every individual Negro contribute a dollar to establish plants to manufacture shoes and clothing for his own people. In the 1930's the theory of the "double-duty dollar" was devised by a black college professor. According to this, "The Negro worker would not only purchase with his dollar the necessities of life but would provide with the dollar spent wages for Negro workers." Anyone who opposed this was called an enemy of the race. Negro ministers picked up the refrain in their sermons and preached, "We can get anything we want from Negroes."

Today CORE, SNCC, the Black Muslims and even the Urban League have come up with schemes to achieve economic control of Negro neighborhoods, all of which are to be financed by various governmental agencies or by foundations and nonprofit groups. None has yet come to fruition.

Today's black power calls for black storekeepers, black landlords, black bankers, black builders, for a whole black world. It remains to be seen if this rising tide of black racism, with its attendant interest in Swahili, its emphasis on African garb, its pretense to black brotherhood, can alone produce the ethnic base for a black business community.

Black businessmen have long attempted to capitalize on the competitive advantages of black solidarity. It was the Negro shopkeepers who originated the 1938 Chicago boycott slogan, "Buy where you can work." These complaints were detailed by sociologists St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton in their classic book, *Black Metropolis,* originally published in 1945. They quoted one angry proprietor as

saying, "I think colored people will have to be educated to trade with each other." Concomitant with this wish was a growing open resentment of the Jewish competition.

A second merchant recorded by the sociologists reminisced: "There were nine Jewish merchants in this block when I opened. They predicted I would only remain open a month. They tried to discourage me. When one of my customers would carry a package of merchandise in their stores, they would open up the package and criticize the goods. They would try to get the customers to get a refund.

"It was the Jew across the street. He was around here first. He's been here four or five years. He has cut prices since he came. He extends credit more than we do. He has even offered our customers credit.

"The Jews are trying to get the colored out.

"They have friends in the city council. They have harassed me ever since I've been here!

"If it was hard in the 1930's to convince Negro merchants that they were not victims of a Jewish conspiracy, it is even harder still in the 1960's."

"There is someone who loves a slum," claims Philadelphia's *Nite Life,* a 1970 bar throw-away largely subsidized by the advertisements of Negro businessmen. "The Dishonest Merchant . . . What are we going to do with this Dishonest Dummy . . . We can BOYCOTT his store so that he will have to leave our neighborhoods and go back to Wynnefield [a Jewish area of the city] sadder but wiser. We can run them out of our community and teach them that we will not tolerate thieves of the poor. Send him back to his segregated suburb so that he can teach his little pig-like sons and daughters to grow up and become HUMAN BEINGS."

The reality of Negro business failure along with the tangible evidence of Jewish business success has created almost as much irrational hatred as has the contemptuous manner of the shopkeeper and his economic exploitation of the poor.

The Jews, by their presence, are the killers of the dream of the black business class. "The Jew, he got a wagon out here," said one Harlem resident, "and he will send his son through college, you understand? Nothing but a wagon selling to these people in this junky neighborhood right here, and he's got a house in the Bronx and he's paying for it, and the child is going to college and he's selling you stringbeans.

"The Jews come here and start with a peanut stand. They'll eat stale bread and live in the back of an old store. They'll starve themselves and get your pennies. And then one morning they'll move out in front with a nice fruit stand or a restaurant. While they're doin' this, the lazy Negro is jitterbugging and the college Negro is lookin' for a soft job."

A woman in her late thirties joined the colloquy. "Another thing, I'm sick and tired of all these Jew business places. Why don't more colored business places open? This is our part of town. They don't live here, but they got all the businesses and everything."

In the past, black business failed because Negroes lacked a commercial tradition, were without access to either public or private credit, and were overwhelmed with feelings of inferiority. It is doubtful that if no white businessmen had ever ventured into the ghetto, black men would have been able to establish a large commercial base. They were not, however, left to their own devices but faced with the world's most formidable competition—the Jews, who had all the assets that the blacks lacked. Under the dual handicaps of their own historical inadequacies and the Jews' historical advantages, the task of forming a substantive Negro business class became impossible.

Acting out the frustration and rage engendered by this failure are the hoodlum kids, the dope addicts and the criminals.

Mrs. Helen Berman, the stout proprietor of a Harlem hole-in-the-wall Jewish haberdashery store, lived in terror

of armed robbery. Twice her screams had brought Manny Marcus, a neighborhood storekeeper, running. Both times it was only a shoplifter who had fled without harming Mrs. Berman.

After her husband died in 1963, she kept her door locked on Tuesdays because her clerk, Wilbur Prescott, had the day off. She admitted only those potential customers who looked respectable or harmless. On Tuesday, August 9, 1965, she made a mistake. At 1:15 P.M. she opened the door for a customer who dragged her to the rear of the store and stabbed her fourteen times. She was found lying face down in a pool of blood underneath the barred window in the small stockroom in the back of her store. This time there were no screams.

The suspect was a nineteen-year-old slight Negro wearing a T-shirt and green pants. An examination of the shop disclosed a package containing three pairs of pants and a sales slip dated August 7. Although the cash box still held a small amount of money, the police inspector said he could not rule out robbery as a motive.

After the murder was discovered, a small crowd gathered outside the store. They were spoken to by the Reverend Nelson C. Dukes, a Negro Baptist minister, who promised to find them jobs.

"People are hungry in this neighborhood and when they get hungry they'll do anything. I'm leading a campaign to get these people work. Otherwise it won't make any difference whether you are white or black—you are in danger," the Reverend Dukes said.

"I've carried a gun ever since I started in business thirty years ago," said Herb Jurnovoy, a proprietor of a large furniture and appliance credit operation on Columbia Avenue, Philadelphia's main black strip. "The colored are always trying to come in here and see what they can get for nothing. They hate the Jews; but the Jews are the only ones who are good to them."

"Yes," agreed Herman Smith, a long-time operator of a

food store down the block from Jurnovoy's "you don't know when there is going to be trouble. You've got to be suspicious."

The escalation of violence had its effect even before widespread rioting began in 1964. There was, and is, a far higher proportion of commercial vacancies on ghetto strips than exists on commercial streets outside the ghetto.

For all the accusations and verifications of exploitation, the strip is not the place to make a fortune. Most Jewish businesses are old businesses. These Mom and Pop shopkeepers have been in operation for twenty or thirty years. The owners are usually fifty years old or more. Logically, Negroes should be replacing the Jews who die or close up shop. To a limited extent they are; however, the marginal nature of business on the strip makes entrepreneurship an unappetizing prospect to most of the emerging Negro middle class. Lower-class Negroes, on the other hand, lack the education, capital and emotional security to become shopkeepers. Success, too, has eluded most who have taken the dare.

The mortality rate for new enterprises is four bankruptcies out of every five starts. Looking at the empty stores on Philadelphia's South Street, Sam Bortnik said, "With each store that shuts down, the neighborhood loses something—not just a business but a sense of the future."

Robert Alexander, Negro manager of Milady's Shoe Store on Columbia Avenue, agreed. "When a business closes up, the place stays empty. It is very hard to get new business here. And every time a store goes, some jobs go for the people who live here. We need these jobs."

Even more disturbing to the remaining Jewish businessmen than the random character of violence is the enthusiastic acceptance of it as an economic and political weapon by an ever-increasing number of black leaders.

No longer are the hoodlums reprimanded by the community. Instead, their actions are applauded and rationalized by militant black intellectuals as after-the-fact

strategies of revolution. Hooliganism has been elevated to insurrection. And the murder of a Mrs. Berman has become an existential act.

LeRoi Jones, poet laureate of black violence, composed an ode to mayhem and bloodshed in Newark. He called his readers' attention to the stoves and refrigerators, record players and shotguns exhibited in his city's major stores. Then he jauntily called attention to the goods in smaller enterprises, which he called "joosh." He exhorted his readers to get the goods by stealing. Robbery he justified by stating that whites always stole from blacks. Looting, however, was not sufficient revenge for the poet. He cried out for violence and white blood, condemning those who failed to act as Uncle Toms. Whites, he claimed, owed blacks anything they wanted. Jones adopted as a refrain that cliché of the black revolution, "Up against the wall, motherfucker," and called for window smashing and dancing in the street to the music of stolen radios. His recipe for a brave new black world—kill the "jellywhite faces."

Convinced that the traditional Christmas-basket approach to race relations has failed, Negro militants said of one such venture by the Columbia Avenue Businessmen's Association, "Merchants should stop giving out little bits of charity at Christmas time and give honest value all year long." The larger Jewish community has begun just such a re-evaluation of the role of its co-religionists in the ghetto, but the first steps toward a positive and realistic Jewish-Negro relationship have been faltering, and the failures have so far outnumbered the successes.

In Philadelphia, an alliance called the Black Business Committee was created between the radical Black Coalition and a group of Jewish business and civic leaders. Its function was to increase Negro participation in business, improve the quality of services available in the ghetto, and improve "the often troubled relationship between Negroes and Jews." It made sixty-one loans, totaling $590,200, to

established Negro enterprises and to new black capitalists, and then went out of business. The value of this alliance has since been questioned.

On a happier note, Max Weiner, a fifty-seven-year-old Philadelphia accountant, real estate agent and one-time member of the old, now-moribund Jewish left, adjusted his commitments to the spirit of the new times and formed the Consumers Education and Protective Association, which is dedicated to publicly unmasking ghetto frauds—many of which are perpetrated by Jews. More radical than the Jewish businessmen, Weiner's flamboyant criticism of ghetto abuses has won him a black following.

Dr. Judd L. Teller, the New York City advisor to national Jewish groups and an authority on Jewish culture, took a more positive tack as early as December 1966. He urged "a survey of Jewish businesses in Negro ghettos and their relocation, even if it involves the removal of tens of thousands of Jews." Terming the tensions between Jews and Negroes as the "most fateful domestic Jewish issue in American history," he stated that "Jews in large American cities must seek and develop opportunities for accommodation with black power and certainly avoid any collision with it.

"Despite what many Negroes believe, Jewish affluence does not derive from the Negro's welfare check. All the Jewish-owned businesses and real estate in the ghetto represent only an infinitesimal fraction of the American Jewish economy. The American Jewish community is capable of creating opportunities that would make possible the relocation of several thousand, or even tens of thousands, of Jewish families who make their living from what are mostly small family businesses." Teller's urging and the creation of innumerable committees, commissions, workshops and discussion groups on the problem by the Jewish establishment have initiated a slow movement in this direction. In 1970 the Jewish Community Relations Council of Philadelphia aided three Jewish merchants in

selling their stores to blacks. Similar activity has been undertaken in other cities.

But whether bailed out or forced out, the great exodus has already begun. "After all," said one retired Jewish merchant from Newark's Central Ward, "this isn't Russia. Jews don't have to stay in this ghetto. This isn't no Pale Settlement."

The ironic result might well be the complete withdrawal, not of all Jewish capital, but of the Jewish physical presence within the ghetto. All that will be left behind will be those enterprises which can be run from a distance —the merciless credit operator, the absentee slumlord and the taproom shark.

A study undertaken in 1968 by the American Jewish Congress reveals just how far this withdrawal has progressed. In a survey of 193 stores in two ten-block areas of Harlem it was discovered that 112 stores, or 58 percent, were owned by Negroes. Of the remaining 81 stores, 60 were run by Jews, the others were Puerto Rican, Chinese or chain stores.

This Jewish exodus will have a profound economic effect on the ghetto and will strongly influence adjustments within the Negro community itself. Without vastly increased funds, which will have to come from the federal government—an unlikely prospect as long as Nixon is President—Negro merchants will be unable to offer the range of goods or the credit with which to purchase them that is currently offered by Jewish merchants.

It is doubtful that even with such grants, merchants will abandon their "exploitive practices" unless the government, too, is willing to underwrite bad credit risks. No public official or leader has yet suggested the implementation of a subsidized price and credit ceiling in the ghetto.

Said sociologist David Caplovitz, "the system in the ghetto exists because it performs important social functions. In a society in which consumption is not only a matter of obtaining material conveniences, but also a means of gaining

self-respect and winning the respect of others, this marketing system makes consumers of the people who fail to meet the requirements of the more legitimate economy. A close association exists between the risk that merchants in the system are willing to accept and their readiness to employ unethical or illegal tactics. These practices are the inevitable consequences of serving the wants of the poorest risks in the current American economy . . . Society," he continued, "presents the poor with the unappetizing choice of giving up consuming and forfeiting the self-esteem that comes from consumption or being exploited."

It is unlikely that the poor will give up buying, and without a radical reorientation of mercantile custom, ghetto exploitation will continue. The net gain to the buying black community will be whatever swelling of pride comes from being fleeced by black men instead of white. The Jew, however, will be removed from his present dangerously exposed position on the front line of the smoldering race war. Or as one Jewish psychiatrist in conversation with a Negro colleague put it, "Then it will be your problem."

14

THE BIG BLACK SCHOOLHOUSE

WEDNESDAY, September 21, 1966, was a gray rainy day in New York City. Outside of East Harlem's new Intermediate School 201, a fortress-like structure (the building's street walls were deliberately left windowless to cut down on breakage costs caused by vandals), fifty demonstrators marched. Among them were Negro and Puerto Rican parents, black nationalists, radical Negro celebrities, white civil rights workers, clergymen, anti-poverty aides, welfare workers, two former members of the local school board (as distinguished from the city-wide group), and two housewives of Japanese descent.

The object of their wrath was white, Jewish Stanley Robert Lisser, who had recently been appointed the principal of I.S. 201. Almost none of the picketers questioned Stanley Lisser's qualifications or commitment; it was his color they protested. Said one demonstrator, "A black man should head an all-colored school." In fact, the stu-

dent body of I.S. 201 was to be half Negro and half Puerto Rican. Some of the militants, but none of the parents, also objected to Lisser's religion.

Despite appearances, the demonstration at I.S. 201 had its general origins in what the Kerner Report called "white racism," which is exemplified in part by the de facto apartheid still practiced by most Northern school boards. The underlying particular cause of the East Harlem action was, oddly enough, not only the reluctance of the board of education to put a black man at the top, but its failure to include any white children in the student body.

In 1958, when 127th Street and Madison Avenue was chosen as the site for a new junior high school, in what appeared to be a disregard of the 1954 Supreme Court decision outlawing segregated education, the mothers of the pupils descended on the school superintendent. Convincing him to acknowledge that any school built at that location could not be integrated, they forced him to cancel construction.

Six years later, on March 7, 1964, the New York Public School System was struck by a boycott. It was led by peppery Reverend Milton Galamison of Bedford–Stuyvesant's Siloam Presbyterian Church, and it emptied every ghetto school in the city. Out of a million-odd pupils, 250,000 played political hooky. Explaining his purpose, Galamison declared, "I would rather see the New York City School System destroyed than continue on a de facto segregated basis."

The board's response to the boycott was to announce a host of fancy new programs. Among them were plans for educational parks; the inauguration of a paired black and white school program, known as the Princeton plan, in which the number of grades in the partner schools are halved and the enrollment in each grade doubled; and the introduction of a new grade pattern. State Education Commissioner James Allen explained that in place of grammar schools running from first to sixth grade, junior high cov-

ering school years seven, eight and nine, and senior high incorporating the tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades, each of the system's three varieties of schools would have four grades. "In this way we can get children out of their neighborhood elementary schools a year earlier, into larger intermediate schools which will draw students from a wider community and thus foster integration." In addition, the city's board of education promised to build all the new intermediate schools in fringe areas between white and black neighborhoods.

No sooner had this promise been made than the board announced the selection of the discarded 127th and Madison site for a new intermediate school—I.S. 201. When angry parents protested the odd choice and declared they would boycott the school if it was segregated, officials soothed them with claims that borderline location was not necessary for integration. "The school," they stated, "would be so good that white parents would voluntarily send their children to Harlem."

To show its serious intent, the board began a series of meetings with community leaders that were to last two years. Declaring that I.S. 201 would be a model school, plans were drawn to reduce class size, to group children heterogeneously within classes, and to purchase a vast array of educational equipment. At last a carefully screened staff was chosen. It was to be 55 percent Negro.

In the spring of 1966 parents finally learned from the new school superintendent, Bernard Donovan, what they feared all along—that the school would be segregated.

Angered and hurt, acknowledging that integration was now impossible, they decided to try a new tack. Said David Spencer, a janitor and active community worker, who had one child enrolled in an integrated school in Astoria and another slated to enter I.S. 201, "I don't want segregation, but if I have to have it I want it on my own terms. I don't want anybody else coming in to tell me what's best for me."

What Spencer and others judged best for them was the power to choose a black principal. Their demand, when examined in the context of the school system's racial situation, does not seem unreasonable. Although one quarter of New York City students were black in 1966, the appointment of a black principal at I.S. 201 would have brought the grand total of Negro principals to five out of 870. Only six of the 1,200 top-level school administrators were then Negro. So, in answer to the demand for a black principal, Assistant Superintendent Daniel Schrieber, who had been the board's chief representative with the community, merely nodded his head. The blacks took this gentle motion for agreement.

The announcement of Stanley Lisser's appointment to the post came as a shock. It was believed to be a calculated insult to the community, and Mrs. Helen Testamarle, president of the Parents Council in District 4, which includes Harlem, accused Superintendent Donovan of acting in bad faith.

"He hasn't ignored us, he's toyed with us. It's like saying you don't count."

For two weeks after the start of the 1966 fall term, the board avoided a direct confrontation at I.S. 201 by declaring that the new building was not yet ready for occupancy and assigning children to their old feeder schools. The gambit failed. Time did not diminish the parents' anger; it only strengthened their resolve. On Monday, September 19, Donovan capitulated and forced Lisser, who had been turned into the Dreyfus of the affair, to resign.

Lisser was an ironic choice for a scapegoat. The ice-skating, tennis-playing principal who had been born in 1926 on the West Side of Manhattan, where his father ran a grocery store, and who was a graduate of New York public schools and City College, had made as his major educational interest the introduction of Negro history and Negro culture into the classroom curriculum.

In a foreword to a mimeographed volume on Negro

figures in African and American history that was prepared at his request by Beryle Banfred, the Negro teacher who was to replace him as head of I.S. 201, he wrote: "A people stripped of pride in their heritage, and without accurate knowledge of their history, are a people without a guiding light or a bedrock. Whether by accident or pernicious design, the true history of the Afro-American, both in Africa and the United States, has been omitted and ignored in our textbooks and our curriculum. Not only is there a lack of knowledge, but there is a vast amount of distorted history which must be rewritten."

Proud of his work with black children, Stanley Lisser said, "Lay people or professional people learn that you're a principal in Harlem and they say, 'Oh the poor fellow. It must be dreadful.' I say 'No.' I am a believer in free public education for all the people . . . The person in our society who is not literate is about doomed to joblessness . . . I have some idea of how it feels to be in the minority. When I was a boy I went to a largely Jewish camp in New Hampshire in a section where the populace was hostile to Jews. I fell out of a canoe one day and floundered in the water. A native raced over, looked down and said, 'Oh, you're one of those damn Jews. I ought to let you drown.' "

Always sympathetic to the problems of blacks in a white system, Lisser told the teachers when the boycott became imminent that there would be no reprisals if they chose to honor the parents' picket line. "You don't have to come in," he said. "You've got to understand how the parents feel."

The teachers, in their turn, were loyal to their new principal and outraged by his forced resignation. The pressure of the teachers, backed by the union, forced Lisser to reconsider the resignation, which had been wrung from him the day before. While Lisser was reconsidering, a delegation of embittered parents marched into a city-wide Board of Education meeting. Along with parents from

Brooklyn and other parts of the city, they hoped to make a new demand for more local control of their schools—the issue upon which Lisser was being crucified.

At 2:45 P.M. a woman moved to the rostrum and asked to speak. Her request was refused because her name was not on the agenda. The denial put the room in an uproar.

The woman then shouted, "The voice of the people is with me! I don't want my child to grow up in the same ghetto as I did."

At that point, Lloyd Garrison, the president of the board and a direct descendant of the abolitionist editor William Lloyd Garrison, adjourned the meeting and told the angry audience, many of whom had waited hours to speak, to "come back tomorrow."

"Who's going to pay the carfare?" one woman shouted.

"We're infuriated," shrieked another.

"We've been infuriated for a long time," echoed Ronald Clark, a Harlem CORE official.

As the regular board members filed out of the room, the audience proceeded to elect its own board, "one that would represent the people." Among those selected were the Reverend Milton Galamison and three of those who had been most active in the I.S. 201 dispute—Reverend Robert Nichols, Mrs. E. Babette Edwards and Mrs. Suki Ports. The "People's Board" was evicted from the building the following day and a two-week boycott at I.S. 201 ensued.

Lisser was heartbroken when the demonstrations materialized. He described the situation as "a mess" and his own reaction to it as "numb." Quick to include themselves in the uproar, Stokely Carmichael of SNCC, Floyd McKissick of CORE, and Roy Innis, a local Harlem leader of some notoriety and future CORE Executive Director, guaranteed the action at 127th Street and Madison Avenue nationwide attention.

School opened with Lisser still the principal. Picketers marched in front of the building with signs that read, "Keep 201 Closed for Either Desegregation or Total Com-

munity Control." Although most of the pupils eventually crossed the boycott line, which in the end numbered less than forty demonstrators, it was obvious that Lisser could never satisfactorily perform his job. To ease his exit, the board announced the creation of three demonstration school districts: one in East Harlem, where I.S. 201 was located; a second in Lower Manhattan, where similar citizen action was threatened; and the third in the Ocean Hill–Brownsville sections of Brooklyn.

The three demonstration school districts each consisted of a small complex of elementary and intermediate schools; in the case of Ocean Hill–Brownsville, there were eight schools and approximately 10,000 children involved. These smaller units were intended to have sufficient autonomy to cut through the bureaucratic red tape strangling the city-wide system, allow for the introduction of specially designed innovative programs, and encourage parent and community participation in the schools in the hopes that this new and positive interest would be reflected in the attitudes of the students. This ad hoc program was financed by the Ford Foundation and was a preview of things to come.

The newspapers, however, portrayed Lisser's departure and his replacement by a Negro as "a victory for racism."

Angered by what she considered an unfair charge, a member of the East Harlem Protestant Parish and an I.S. 201 activist, retorted, "What we see happening in the schools is a result of racism, but when we object we are branded racists by the same people who have always called us apathetic."

Said East Harlem's white minister, Reverend Robert Nichols, "Harlem has accepted the definition of itself as a colony . . . If it cannot participate in white American society, it is no longer going to be exploited by overseers who commute into the neighborhood by day, wreak havoc with the lives of black people, and withdraw by night with big pay checks . . . A way must be found to make the

public school part of the very fabric of the ghetto community."

Four years after Lisser's departure and the appointment of a black principal, the *New York Times* reported some educational progress at I.S. 201.

Dr. Lisser's dismissal and the creation of model demonstration school districts did little to dampen the fervor of the black militants in other parts of the city. In the spring of 1968, nineteen teachers from the Ocean Hill area of Brooklyn were the targets of black action, which advocated, among other things, community control of the school and educational decentralization. As in the case of Stanley Lisser, first race and then religion was at issue. But in Brooklyn the Jewish question was in the open and the anti-Jewish sentiment considerably stronger than it had been in Harlem two years before. All of the teachers in Brooklyn under attack by the new community board were Jews and the objections to them were explicitly stated in terms of both race and religion.

The fallout from the Ocean Hill explosion drifted back across the East River and settled on Harlem's P.S. 175, which, like a majority of ghetto schools, was headed by a Jewish principal, in this instance, Harvey Nagler.

On June 12, 1968, Nagler, irritated by what he termed the "excessive absences" of one of his black teachers, Ralph Poynter, fired Poynter for spending his time on the picket lines at Ocean Hill instead of in the Harlem classroom with his students. The community's retribution for Poynter's dismissal was swift: Nagler's resignation was demanded immediately. A sit-in by parents and militants began. About twenty picketers placed themselves in the school's entrance. Poynter himself was arrested for physically trying to stop Nagler from entering the school at 134th Street between Lenox and Seventh avenues.

Fueling the controversy over Poynter's dismissal were new demands for "absolute community control of the schools." Bitter anti-white and anti-Jewish broadsides were

stuffed into neighborhood mailboxes. Some of these de-
clared "Al[illegible] by deceit educational material".
murderers of colored people are warned th
hear might mean your number has come u
out."

The integrated staff divided along rac
contretemps. Negroes supported Poynter.
Nagler. Depressed, harassed and not a litt
the onslaught against him, the principal
signment from his district supervisor, Sid
"so as not to cause further confusion and c

In still another trouble spot, Bedford-St
paign led by students, the Parents Associat
Afro-American Teachers Association and
community groups forced the transfer of
principal, J. S. Rosenman, of Boys High
had been the alma mater of such men as A
Sidney Hook, and Norman Mailer.

The action at Boys High had been a y
It was conceived in September 1967, wh
thirty members of the Student Council o
the Afro-American Students Association to
changing nature of the student body in a
The Association's chairman, Ronald Brela
"With the times that prevail now, we ne
as principal to identify with. We're a new b

Frank Cleveland, a senior at the school, a
fer a black man, but we're not stupid en
want any black here. We want the comm
faculty and the students to pick the new ma

John Felder, the editor of the student
claimed, "We won't accept the conditions
even our older brothers accepted. We don
tem, we fight it."

Among the things that the students wo
was a continued neglect of Negro histo

This problem was laid at the door of Principal Rosenman. In addition, the school head, who had governed for less than two years, was charged with "failure to involve the community in the educational process."

On May 28, 1968, the students called an assembly at which their grievances were aired. They walked out of their regular classes to attend the impromptu meeting; a month of agitation followed. In the turmoil and confusion, seventeen of the 132-member faculty asked for transfers. All of the departing teachers were Jews, as were a majority of the remaining ninety-five white teachers. The twenty Negro teachers all strongly supported the students. For that matter, not all of the remaining whites and Jews were unsympathetic. Arnold Marcus, a guidance counselor, said, "Everybody used to complain that the boys were apathetic. Now they are thinking and writing; there is tremendous ferment."

Marcus was not only excited by the sudden spurt in student activity, which he clearly believed would aid the learning process, but was also convinced of the essential justice of the students' cause. "White racism," he charged, "pervades the faculty."

Ted Horn, a business teacher, avoided the race issue but contended that "local control of the schools would mean the end of tenure rights." Tenure guarantees that after a teacher has served an apprenticeship for a stipulated length of time, she or he cannot be dismissed without due process, which includes formal charges and a hearing procedure. In reality, tenure clauses in the teachers' contracts with New York City Board of Education make it almost impossible to fire a teacher.

Clare Steiner, an art instructor, added, "Authority is breaking down and we are all afraid."

"We all want a better school," another art teacher, Henry Zeiwian, commented sadly, "even if we don't know how to get one."

What happened in New York is still happening all across the country. Direct action is a result of the realization that the schools are the only means by which most black children can escape the repetition of their parents' life-cycle and the knowledge that the schools are not performing the task expected of them. The effect of this failure is a confrontation not only between whites and blacks but, specifically, between Negroes and Jews. This is so because Jews still play a substantial and frequently commanding role within the remaining white student bodies and in the teaching and administrative forces of the nation's big-city school systems.

The general outlines of the conflict are clear. In 1954 integration became the law of the land. It was a law accepted by white Northerners as long as it was enforced only in the South against de jure segregation. When a spate of legal decisions made the court's mandate applicable to the North, attitudes hardened.

In response to the influx of black children into Northern city schools, there was an exodus of white youngsters. The rapid population changes created a de facto segregation every bit as harsh as the de jure system that existed below the Mason-Dixon line. Negroes, despite the rhetoric of Northern politicians and civil rights leaders, found their children in overaged, under-staffed, poorly equipped schools, unable to learn even the simple rudiments of reading, writing and arithmetic. Because students were automatically promoted, a method purportedly adopted to avoid the psychic trauma of "being left behind," it was necessary for teachers to concern themselves with the fact that their pupils frequently functioned well below their grade level.

The inability of Northern school systems to either integrate or educate finally goaded Negroes into action. The parents at I.S. 201 only took to the streets after the Board of Education violated almost all of its agreements with the community. By the time the Ocean Hill and Bedford-Stuy-

vesant school communities began to demonstrate, all plans for integration had been shelved. Talk about educational parks had ceased. The paired school scheme was obviously failing. This arrangement, which was tried in eight schools —four Negro and four white—paired racially different but geographically similar schools by combining their student bodies. All the children in the first, second and third grade were put in one building; all the children in the fourth, fifth and sixth grades were sent to the second building. Under attack from the beginning by white parent groups, the schools rapidly lost both their spirit and their white students. Similarly, the introduction of Reverend Galamison's pet scheme—open enrollment, a plan that permits Negro parents to transfer their children to schools out of their own predominantly black neighborhoods—proved ineffective. While Galamison's plan was modeled on a practice long in use in Philadelphia, open transfers in the Quaker City had also failed to stop the growing segregation of that city's schools. Ironically, even the new grade patterning, of which I.S. 201 was but one example, appeared to increase rather than reduce segregation.

The more public school and city officials seem to be grappling with the problem, the worse the problem seems to become. The proportion of Negro and Puerto Rican children in the elementary schools of New York has risen steadily since 1955. In Manhattan over 75 percent of the students are black or Puerto Rican, and one out of every five of the city's elementary, junior high and new intermediate schools now have black and Puerto Rican populations above 85 percent. This is in contrast to general population statistics for the area, which show that while only one child in seven between the ages of five and fourteen is black or Puerto Rican, one out of every three and a half public school children is so listed.

Even between 1950 and 1960, when men of good will honestly believed that integration was possible, the enrollment of white children in New York parochial schools

jumped 35 percent, from 307,000 to 415,000; while the 11 percent increase in the public school population was all black and Puerto Rican, the phenomenal growth of the parochial schools has further aggravated Negro-Jewish relations by making the Jews the single largest group of whites left in the public schools.

The New York pattern can also be seen in Philadelphia. Despite the appointment of the most adventurous and committed new school board in the nation and the inauguration of a vast bussing effort, Philadelphia has been steadily losing the battle for integration. In fact, the board's short-term efforts to integrate the schools have probably had a long-term segregating effect. Certainly bussing has not stopped the exodus of whites from the schools and has in fact probably abetted it. Although Negroes make up only one-third of the city's population, their children now constitute a clear majority of public school pupils. In the quarter of a century since the end of World War II, the Negro population's proportion in the schools has jumped from 24 to 60 percent.

Detroit, too, has admitted the failure of its large-scale pilot program, which was designed to maintain the racial balance in three of its major high schools located in integrated neighborhoods. In these schools heavy emphasis was put on enriched art and science courses in the hope of encouraging white students to remain. The program received generous financial backing from the state legislature, yet the new courses made little difference in the downward trend of white enrollment.

The pattern was as clear at Mumford High, in a wealthy, once heavily Jewish area, as it was in middle-class McKenzie, with its championship basketball team, or in the Near Northside's Pershing High. Despite a great spurt of organizational activity and propaganda from a small group of Mumford's liberal white Jewish parents, the Jews did not like the incursion of Negro students

any more than did other whites. "We should," said Jewish attorney Robert Albern, who headed up the citizen effort at Mumford, "have recognized the extent of white resistance to integration."

Carol Botkin, a mother of four children, ranging in age from three to eighteen, lives in the heavily Jewish Chicago Northside. She commented sardonically on the attitude of her neighbors. "There was a rumor of busing in one Negro child into the school last year, and the whole neighborhood got hysterical and threatened to move out lock, stock and barrel."

As Carol Botkin noted, there is probably no city in the North more segregated than Chicago, nor a city where ethnic differences are more pronounced. "Most of us on the Northside moved here from the old Jewish Westside when the Negro ghetto expanded because we wanted to stick together and because we didn't want to abandon the city."

Mrs. Botkin, a graduate of the University of Chicago, whose attitude toward Negroes and school integration is considerably more liberal than that of many of her neighbors, said, "I'm not so sure that if I had to make the move all over again, I wouldn't go to the suburbs. To tell the truth, although Chicago Jews may be a little more vociferous than Jews in other places, I believe we all basically feel the same way."

"The problem," said outspoken Betty Spolan, former president of the Home and School Association of Philadelphia's City Center Elementary School, "is not race, it's class. God knows, there are no people with stronger objections to restrictions based on race and religion than Jews. And Jews certainly believe in education. They wouldn't want it denied to anybody. But when it comes to sending their children to schools with large numbers, not of Negro children, but of lower-class children who are unable to easily assimilate middle-class information, they be-

come alarmed and start pulling their children out. Color integration is fine as long as all the children are middle class."

To back up Mrs. Spolan's words, Jews can indeed point to a long record of fighting for educational opportunities for Negroes as well as for themselves. Jewish national organizations were appalled for decades by the South's double-entry school system. They were among the most enthusiastic welcomers of the 1954 school desegregation decision. What Jews and other Northern white liberals could not know is that desegregation would cause an upheaval in the schools their own children attended. When this fact became apparent, Jews like other whites withdrew their actual, if not their verbal, support for integration. As a consequence, there is no group of white parents toward whom Negroes feel greater anger than they do toward the Jews, for they see them, "like other whites," as bigots as well as hypocrites. Disappointed by Jewish promises, Negroes are enraged.

There is, nevertheless, an important difference between Negro and Jewish attitudes toward the school system. Unlike poor Jews, who love school, poor Negroes usually abhor it. They see in it an institution that destroys whatever small feelings of self-worth they possess. To the self-made Harlem intellectual Claude Brown, school was a place to stay away from, a completely irrelevant institution where the subjects taught had nothing to do with real life, which was the life of "the street." In school, boys like Claude Brown are either apathetic or angry, sullen or disruptive. Their behavior creates a chaotic atmosphere making it impossible for those children who can learn to learn. Fear, too, is omnipresent. In integrated situations the white and frequently Jewish middle-class-oriented child achieves success, while the black child from a barely articulate family frequently does not. Failure in turn breeds hostility. To protect their children from black physical violence, Jews in areas such as Philadelphia's once solidly Jewish and

now transitional Wynnefield neighborhood, have called for police protection within the schools. In addition, they have formed ad hoc policing groups under the auspices of the new and rapidly growing Jewish Defense League. The JDL, founded in New York in the summer of 1968 and since spread to seventeen other cities, is another Jewish answer to the Negro problem. Its members, unlike the adherents of the Committee and the Congress, do not believe they can afford to turn the other cheek. "Our purpose," said JDL general counsel Bert Zweibron, "is to change the image of the Jew as the eternal patsy."

Jews have responded to the threat of black downgrading of scholastic standards by insisting on the re-enforcement of classroom track systems, where integration does exist, thus segregating classes by color that had previously been segregated only by ability, and attempting in other places to keep Negroes out by joining or even heading up "save our neighborhood school" organizations. The purpose of these groups is to maintain racially and economically pure school districts and to enforce strict adherence to district lines in pupil assignment. They oppose such integrating tools as busing and open transfers.

To break down classroom barriers, integrationists such as Philadelphia's Sylvia Meek, a white, Jewish intellectual who is married to a Negro social worker since turned black militant, escalated their demands beyond the mere presence of blacks in white schools. At the behest of the mild-mannered, local Urban League, Mrs. Meek prepared an ideal program for the city's schools. It called for the creation of twenty huge educational parks, each with a student body of 20,000 children. On these campuses would be children varying in age from four to eighteen. All would be carefully homogenized to avoid racial or academic lumps. The plan, in addition, envisioned the shutting down of such schools as Girls High and Central, which cater to the educationally talented. Meritocracy was to be abolished in favor of a system where privilege

was to be used to compensate rather than reward. Under such a rearrangement, the emphasis would shift away from the outstanding student toward giving support and recognition to gains made by the underachiever. External standards would be abandoned in favor of gauging each individual by matching his progress against his ability. College scholarships would be awarded on the basis of race, need, and desire rather than academic excellence. The philosophic underpinnings of designs such as those advanced by Mrs. Meek were that Negroes must be given extra boosts to equalize their situation. In time, these aids would enable Negroes to confront the white world on an equal footing. Past suffering, argued this second and last generation of integrationists, must be given equal weight with academic ability. Compensation rather than ability was to be the standard employed.

Jews in particular were angered by the proposal to apply a kind of golf handicap arrangement to education. In America the Jews' position had been built on academic and intellectual excellence, on competition and achievement. Any dilution of these values, any tampering with the status quo, no matter how it helped Negroes, could not, they believed, do anything but harm to Jews. To prevent such tampering, Jews joined with other whites.

In Philadelphia, two Jewish fathers, Jerry Miller and Benjamin Pomerantz, founded a Parents and Taxpayers Association, which is in essence a save-our-neighborhood school organization formed to sue government agencies in order to block public expenditures on such items as busing. Oddly, neither of the men viewed their efforts as attempts at discrimination; both claimed to abhor either legal segregation or barriers based on race in educational institutions. They saw nothing wrong, however, in de facto segregation. In this stand they were undoubtedly supported by their parents' memories of the early days of the century, when immigrant Jewish children found themselves in all-Jewish schools, albeit public schools.

Between 1840, when heavy European immigration began, and the end of World War II, ethnic and religious segregation was the trademark of the big cities of America. These groups, as groups, however, never felt the need for integration either within their communities or in their schools. They brought with them, in Murray Friedman's words, "great expectations and great group pride. The crowning achievement of the public schools," Friedman pointed out, "was to Americanize these immigrant children. Starting with segregated groups, they ended up with integrated individuals."

To a certain extent white European immigrants placed a positive value on ethnically or religiously segregated education. The development of the parochial school system, which is in reality a public school system for Catholics, came about because the Irish community felt the need to support and maintain itself. It is only in more recent times that Poles, Italians and other Catholics have used these schools in great numbers.

The growth of parochial schools in the suburbs, however, has less to do with the black problem and more to do with that existential American question of identity. Jews have followed in the footsteps of their Catholic compatriots. In second- and third-generation Jewish neighborhoods, there is a burgeoning Jewish parochial school movement. These institutions, more secular than sacred, are devoted to the promulgation of Hebrew literature, the Hebrew language and the study of the modern state of Israel. They are a far cry from the schools of the first-generation immigrants of the Lower East Side and Williamsburg. In those schools religious studies were emphasized. The distance between the Akiba Hebrew Academy in suburban Merion in 1968 and the Yeshiva Torah Vodaath on Bedford Avenue in Williamsburg in 1948 must be measured in light years.

In 1948 the Yeshiva Vodaath was housed in a musty old building adjoining the Hasidic synagogue. The sun-

light filtered only fitfully through the dust-stained windows. From 8 A.M. until 2 P.M. the children were taught only sacred subjects. From 2 P.M. until 5 P.M. they were drilled in secular matters.

The boys, their forelocks grown long and twisted, seemed like waifs from a European ghetto. Only the brightly colored beanie with the airplane propeller covering the head of the boy who forgot his skull cap revealed that the class was being held in America. In contrast, the young students of the latter-day Jewish school in Merion are as American as the flag.

It is the intensity of the political concern of those Jewish scholars of 1948 that differs from their counterparts in 1968. Twenty years ago the children wore Henry Wallace buttons as symbols of their support for the left-wing, radical third-party movement that advocated coexistence abroad and social justice at home. This juxtaposition of religious orthodoxy and political radicalism was the hallmark of that generation of Jews. The political temper of the present generation of students is moderate—a kind of conservative liberalism that finds radicalism abhorrent and a change in the status quo dangerous. The Yeshiva student has doffed his yarmulka for a boy scout cap. His education is no longer a reminder of the past; it is an accommodation with the present. It has, in common with Protestant establishment private schools, a desire for separation from the masses. It is a self-segregation designed to create an elite.

A large proportion of Jews who have not fled into the suburbs, into private schools or into parochial schools, have tended to patronize Negroes. It is no accident that many of the most militant, educated black nationalist leaders outside of the Black Muslims have been products of integrated education, usually in schools with heavily Jewish populations. An example of the kind of automatic patronization of these "integrated schools" is seen in the attitude of Joseph Agin, the Jewish principal of the heav-

ily Jewish Spruance Elementary School in the all-white Northeast section of Philadelphia. When interviewed by that city's outspoken *Philadelphia Magazine* about the busing in of Negro students from the slums, Principal Agin said, "The initial reaction to the busing program was excellent in this neighborhood and still is . . . we are trying everything we can think of to make both the parents and kids feel welcome. Just this past Christmas we gave a ball point pen to every kid in the class . . . If there is any animosity, it is because kids come from a lower economic level and have been bussed into an area where the economic level is higher."

Commenting on the problem created by busing, Agin said, "It takes up a lot of the faculty's time trying to raise their level. There are certain standards of behavior that some of these kids need to learn—their behavior is probably based on their background. There is some fighting here but it is mostly among the colored kids, not among the colored and white children. I would like to say it's a way of life for them."

As for Spruance's Jewish children being bussed into Negro schools, Agin shook his head negatively. "We aren't ready, nor will parents accept reverse busing . . . Maybe," he concluded, "integration is not as important as it was first thought to be."

Among the reasons that Jews no longer believe in the ultimate importance of integration is the fact that the large influx of Negroes into what was once a white system has raised a host of issues that threaten the values which have governed public education since its inception. The current scheme of things has allowed Jews to succeed while dooming Negroes to failure. Any tinkering with the machinery to aid Negroes, it seems to many Jews, would be at their own expense.

New York City education statistics illustrate the difference in the value of current public education for Jews and for Negroes. While Negroes now make up more than one-

quarter of the public school population, only 10 percent of their children are in academic high schools. Because of a whole host of economic, social and educational factors, more than 60 percent of college-age New York Jews are in college, in contrast to a bare 6 percent of Negro youth. Ironically, and completely contrary to the Jewish experience, there are now more spaces for Negroes in colleges and universities than there are eligible blacks to fill them.

Of the nearly 30,000 children who in the late 1960's were graduating from New York City high schools with academic diplomas—the only kind acceptable for college admittance—only 700 were Negro. At the same time, of the nearly 50,000 boys and girls in the third grade, 60 percent, almost all of whom were Negro, read so poorly that the Board of Education was forced to declare "their success in higher grades unlikely." In fact, the bulk of Negro children seem to learn less with every year spent in school. In Harlem 30 percent of third-grade pupils read below grade level and 22 percent read above it. By sixth grade, however, 81 percent of the students fall below grade median and only 12 percent excel it. This same pattern of geometric retrogression was found in word knowledge, arithmetic and even I.Q. tests. If the evidence is to be believed, schools seem to subtract rather than add to black children's intelligence quotient.

In the Philadelphia jungle fewer than half of the black children graduate from high school, and many of those who do are functionally illiterate. This pattern is also in evidence in all of this country's great urban poverty pockets. In general, wherever masses of poor blacks live, 60 percent of all the boys between sixteen and twenty-one are not in school and not working. This situation bodes ill for everyone, white and black, for there is a close correlation between school dropouts, the crime rate and violent death. Homicide is the second leading cause of mortality among Negro men between fifteen and twenty-five. Failure

in school is a death warrant for one out of every twenty blacks. The dropout not only courts a brutal demise but dooms himself to joblessness, economic dependency and possible imprisonment.

The public schools, which have served all other immigrant groups as an acculturating institution, have notably failed to alter the life-style of blacks. If anything, the education system has tended only to re-enforce the distortions that already exist in society as a whole. For example, Negro girls uniformly do better in school than their male counterparts. Their truancy rates are lower, their academic ratings higher, fewer drop out, and more go on to college. This pattern is a product of the matriarchal structure of Negro society, and as such, it helps to maintain that structure. Because education is the key to employment and Negro women are for the most part better educated than Negro men, they obtain and hold better jobs. Their employment advantages, however, only serve to increase their low opinion of black men and to further demoralize the black men themselves.

It is this vicious cycle that Negroes are struggling to end. However, the steady rejection of their educational pleas, combined with the failure of the few plans now in effect to meet their needs, has resulted in an increasing radicalization of black youth and the intensity of black educational grievances. Originally, Negroes' demands focused on integration; now they focus on community involvement. Both thrusts have met deep resistance from Jews, whose experience of the community throughout the centuries has been so decisively different from the Negroes'.

Unlike the Negro in whom slavery has erased all memory of literacy and culture, the Jew cherishes his tradition of being "the people of the book." Even in the most poverty-stricken villages of Europe, Jews found a way to support their scholars. Each community provided, besides a place of worship, at least one room where the Yeshiva students could spend their days and nights poring over

the ancient texts and commentaries of the Talmud and Gemorah.

Such was the social standing of the scholar in the Old World that even the poorest and most ragged was considered a prize matrimonial catch. Rich Jewish merchants arranged marriages for their daughters with young students who were never expected to support their wives but rather to spend their days in accumulating knowledge.

In addition to resident scholars, the Eastern European Jewish culture—from which most American Jews spring—also produced a kind of holy, wandering scholar. These itinerant sages, who played a variation on the theme first sung by the Christian mendicants of the Middle Ages, had no material possessions. They slept in the scholar rooms in the towns they visited and ate one meal a day provided on a rotating basis by the wealthier Jewish families. Nonetheless, they were greatly honored.

Besides resident scholars and wandering sages, each Jewish community had a rabbi who, though he conducted the religious rites, was not a priest (Jews have not had a priestly caste since the second destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in A.D. 70). His authority came less from his religious role than it did from his ability to arbitrate disputes, to solve problems, to give advice and to offer solace. In fact, the word rabbi means teacher. "Covet," or honor, in the Diaspora has been awarded not to the soldier or merchant but to the learned man.

The immigrant Jew was quick to adopt this heritage to American life. Education in the "golden land" was not only a blessing in itself but was to be the key to social and economic ability. This reverence for education pushed the Jews out of the working class and into the middle class in one generation and also ensured that large numbers of first-generation Jews would be teachers.

Love of learning and academic success, however, were not the only factors at work. Discrimination in the 1920's, '30's and '40's played a large part in bringing Jews to the

teaching profession. In those three crucial decades a college education was the pedigree of the upper and upper-middle classes in the United States. Less than 10 percent of the total population attended schools of higher learning.

Jews, out of all proportion to their numbers in the population and to their economic place in society, sent their children to college. Unable upon graduation to find positions traditionally reserved for the well-educated in big business, in high finance, engineering and architecture, in the colleges and universities, Jews turned in large numbers to public service. They became social workers and teachers. It was only with the end of World War II and the lifting of discriminatory barriers that Jews began to look beyond the public schools for employment. As a result there is a preponderance of Jewish teachers, principals, supervisors and administrative personnel in the nation's big-city schools. In fact, the proportion is now greatly in excess of the number of Jewish children remaining in the classrooms.

In his book *The Passionate People,* journalist Roger Kahn attempted to re-create the varieties of Jewish life in America. In the chapter called "Melammed" (Wise Man), Kahn illuminates the feelings of one kind of Jew who teaches poor Negroes. The chapter's hero, Bernard Rogovin, a thirty-seven-year-old teacher of history and speech in Brooklyn's all-Negro General Terhune Slocum Junior High School, calls his school "a shocker. It shocks me and I've been going there every day for seven years . . . Its walls are defaced by chalk obscenities . . . tight steel grilles guard its 110 windows not against vandals but to protect the passerby . . . from the children within." Particularly upsetting to Rogovin is the change in the student body since he was a youngster and the neighborhood was Jewish. He notes with horror that an average of seven girls a year drop out because of pregnancy and that children regularly have intercourse in the coat rooms.

More disheartening to Rogovin than even the pregnancies and delinquencies is the hopelessness and anger of his students. Of this teacher, Kahn wrote, "He worked and plotted to relate to these strange pathetic kids and threw out everything, or tried to, that he had been taught as a middle-class Jewish boy, listening to middle-class Jewish teachers. But how could he relate to fatherless girls, who smiled through intercourse in classroom closets before their breasts were fully formed? How could he relate to children who viewed his Cooperative Citizenship Class as JCC or Jewish Concentration Camp."

At last Rogovin concedes defeat. "I can't stand it any more. What am I doing knocking the life out of myself, busting my balls, teaching these kids who don't want to learn . . . I'm an alien and I don't want to be an alien any more. I want to teach where I belong, with Jewish kids."

Teachers like the quasi-fictional Bernie Rogovin, and principals like the real-life Stanley Lisser, at one time believed that, as Jews, they had a special insight into the Negro problem. They did not and do not. It is only from a distance that such Jews have empathy. Their support is intellectual not emotional. Up close, they are appalled by the squalor of Negro life and what has become of the "old neighborhood." Their feelings are not so different from those that their Eastern European parents and grandparents felt toward the Rumanian, Hungarian, Russian and Polish peasants who surrounded them.

The enormity of the gulf that separated Jew and peasant is revealed most poignantly in Isaac Bashevis Singer's novel *The Slave*. Singer lays bare the contempt that the Jew, steeped in centuries of law and literature, had for the barely articulate peasant. This same view of the "goy" as an untermensch, a less-than-human being, has been transferred in America from the peasant to the Negro. Negro parents sense this attitude and resent it, believing that it has much to do with their children's failure. Studies

tend to back them up by demonstrating that a child's scholastic achievement is to a great extent based on his teacher's expectations.

In the schools, as in the welfare bureaucracy, Jewish contempt, concealed by a mask of patronage, is on a disastrous collision course with endemic Negro paranoia. Kenneth Clark, in his book *Dark Ghetto,* quoted a Harlem black teacher who said resentfully, "I find that the Jewish people in particular will protect their own and are protected by their own. In our school they say that the children just can't be taught. Even when the method used to teach is not a good one, [the Jew] blames the children for not having the mentality to learn . . . the Negro teacher has a hard road to travel. Mostly they are doing a good job, but I don't think there are enough Negroes in the teaching field with guts to fight against the things that should not be. Negro teachers are too often trying to placate and please white teachers."

Of course, not all middle-class Jews fail in their attempt to reach out to black children. There is Jerry Weinstein, for example, the Philadelphia teacher with a jazz band background who found in Negro music a projection of the despair and wildness within himself. He saw the blacks in his classes not so much as pupils but as peers who acted out his own feelings of rebellion. In turn, the boys viewed Jerry not as "the teach" but as one of them, an equal perhaps more equal than the others. Because children learn less from teachers than they do from one another, they learned from Jerry.

Weinstein was so successful that the Ford Foundation plucked him out of the school system to be a staff specialist. Now at Columbia University he teaches teachers how to teach ghetto children. Whether his pupils will be as successful as their teacher remains to be seen. At any rate, the society's reward was to remove Jerry from the ghetto classroom.

Another man who has proved himself to the Negro

community is Elliot Shapiro. The subject of an adulatory book called *Our Children Are Dying,* Shapiro also places human relationship above academic achievement. In 1961, while he was principal of Harlem's P.S. 119, Shapiro was willing to embarrass the educational establishment and to play ombudsman for the community in which his school was located. He shocked the educational hierarchy by placing an ad, along with his teachers in the newspapers, decrying the physical condition of his school building and inviting the authorities to come up and see it some time. In response Mayor Wagner and his entourage arrived. They were just in time to catch Principal Shapiro, broom in hand, chasing a rat. The incident made headlines and resulted in the construction of a new building to house P.S. 119.

In his career as a principal, Shapiro has also made it a point to aid the parents of the children in his school in their battles with landlords, merchants and the police. Commenting on his role, Shapiro said, "Our school has an organic relationship with the community . . . What happens in the street affects our children. Education that stops at three in the afternoon is mis-education."

His philosophy of education, like Jerry Weinstein's, is based on the importance of the individual and the need for both the principal and teacher to relate to each child on a one-to-one basis. Explaining his theory of using teachers and principals to provide surrogate families for their pupils, Shapiro said, "Many of our children are not in real communication with adults. So, we have to bring adults into their lives, adults they can depend on and feel at ease with. Coming from large families often with working mothers and no fathers, our children lose their childhood too early. They become self-reliant, in one sense, too soon. When they're seven or eight, they're as self-reliant as a middle-class young adult. But a dependency relationship with an adult is necessary for children . . . school has to be a place where they can be children—a specially

created world in which small events are important, in which they can discuss these events with an adult they can trust . . . within the framework of love, the child begins to develop his own inner controls."

Shapiro, like Weinstein, was rewarded for his understanding and successes with poor black children by being removed from them. Shortly after he won his battle for a new building for P.S. 119, he became the Director for Cooperative Action in Urban Education, and after that he was appointed the District Superintendent of Local School District No. 3, one of the three demonstration areas created by the New York school board in 1966 in the wake of the troubles at I.S. 201. Shapiro's new area did not even include Harlem.

It was the attention to individual human need and the abandonment of an institutionalized approach that won both Weinstein and Shapiro their material rewards as well as the admiration of their students. It was an affection that superseded race, religion and class. It was their human, emotional approach that gave these two Jewish educators rapport not only with their pupils but with the emerging spirit of both the black power and New Left movements. No more clear-cut examples of this institutional breeder phenomenon exist than the educational factories of the United States, be they grammar schools, intermediate schools, high schools, colleges or universities.

Student revolts across the United States and Europe, parents' protests in Harlem, sit-ins in Ocean Hill, all spring from the demand that schools be geared to people. Almost all militant educational demands are pointed toward a human end—the forcing of society to recognize that students are people. Certainly this was the meaning of the December 1966 resolution presented to the American Federation of Teachers by Keith Baird, a Barbados-born teacher of languages at Bushwick High in a black section of Brooklyn, that called for the abandonment of the use of the word Negro and the substitution of "African-

American." Such, too, is the motive behind the calls for the teaching of black history, black culture and Swahili.

That black students take these demands with utmost seriousness was demonstrated on November 17, 1967, when students from eleven largely black high schools in Philadelphia marched on the Board of Education with a set of requests that included the right to wear African-style clothes to school and to be taught black history by a black man. Particularly disturbing to the local Jewish community was the fact that the demand for black history had first been made publicly by a street-corner agitator named James Lester, who coupled them with the statement, "No Jew has the right to teach black history when there are so many beautiful black brothers around."

Lester's injection of anti-Semitism into the issue was not an isolated incident. Almost every time that the question of black culture has been raised, it has been coupled with anti-Jewish broadsides. Jews have been outraged more and more by the seeming acceptance of anti-Semitism along with black culture by major national institutions. A case in point was the selection of a former Harlem teacher John Hatchett by New York University to head up its new Martin Luther King Afro-American student center. Hatchett was the author of an article in the *Afro-American Teachers' Forum* that accused "Jewish educators of mentally poisoning black pupils."

It was the Jews' turn to protest. The Jewish Defense League picketed NYU with signs that read, "Black is Beautiful, Nazism is Ugly." University authorities were unmoved. Denying that they knew about Hatchett's journalistic proclivities at the time they hired him, they refused to dismiss him.

In Jewish minds the undertone of anti-Semitism has done much to cloud the issue of Negro cultural rights. This is unfortunate because black cultural pleas have much in common with the concepts that inspired the new breed of Jewish parochial schools. The idea of Negroes

endeavoring to preserve as well as to create positive ethnic identity, however, has generally been greeted with hoots of derision by most whites, including many Jews. The idea of Negro inferiority is so in-bred in America that any emphasis on black achievements is viewed by white parents as a threat to their own children.

These reactions have made it increasingly clear that if a majority of Negroes are ever going to achieve academic success, they will have to gain control of their own schools. This is the meaning of the call for community control. If it is granted, blacks for the first time will control not only the images fed to their children but also the immense power that goes with so large a patronage system.

On the college level, black students around the country are demanding control over all aspects of their academic life. As the momentum of the black power movement has increased, so has the shrillness of the voices advocating it. Early in September 1968, three hundred Negro students at the University of Illinois took up the theme in a violent fashion—smashing furniture in the student lounge after school officials refused to respond to their housing and loan demands. The students were part of the university's Project 500, designed to provide scholarships to disadvantaged youths.

Five months later, sixty-five out of 103 Negro students at Massachusetts' intellectually elite Brandeis University, the first of the nation's Jewish-sponsored schools of higher learning, barricaded themselves inside Ford Hall, where the campus telephone switchboard is located. There they were joined by sixty people from Boston's black community. From their fortress they issued "nonnegotiable demands for an autonomous center of Afro-American studies" and dropped a banner out of the window which read "Malcolm X University." The school administration was also accused of having a "racist attitude."

The students seemed to be either unaware of, or indifferent to, the civil rights background of Brandeis' Presi-

dent, Morris Abram. Abram had long fought against segregation and was a prime mover in obtaining John Kennedy's support for Martin Luther King in 1960. True to his principles, Abram did not call the police or evict the students; repeatedly he expressed his willingness to discuss the issues with the students and refused to capitulate to "nonnegotiable demands." Eleven days later the students filed out of the building and stated that they would "continue the struggle in new forms."

Roughly four hundred miles to the south, similar but somewhat modified demands were being made at Swarthmore College. Courtney Smith, the Quaker president of that Quaker institution, was equally sympathetic with the students' aspirations and equally puzzled by their provocative and taunting tone. On the eighth day of the demonstration Smith was struck by a fatal heart attack. Abashed and saddened, the demonstrators abruptly ended their action. Soon after, at Yale University, black students demanded separate dormitories.

Roy Wilkins of the NAACP watched the growing clamor for campus blackness with grave misgivings. Finally, at the sixtieth annual corporation meeting of the nation's oldest civil rights agency, he spoke out.

"These demands represent in essence the setting up of racially based Jim Crow schools . . . the use of public tax monies to do this is unconstitutional." The NAACP, he said, would go to court to block the creation of "autonomous black studies programs and black student dormitories."

Wilkins had barely spoken when Roy Innis of CORE drew up for attack. "Wilkins," he said, "has consistently opposed the legitimate aspirations of black people . . . We support the demands of black students . . . because of their need at this stage for black identity and self-awareness. We are against the policy of integration and assimilation offered by Mr. Wilkins. We say the civil rights movement is dead."

The tide, it appears, is running in Mr. Innis' direction.

In April 1968, for example, a black caucus was held at the meeting of the National Committee for Support of Public Schools. It declared, "Whites, and especially white professionals, still determine our children's educational present and occupational future . . . It is foolish to believe that adults can go to the root of the problem in the public schools without consulting . . . the students. . . . The people of the ghetto—the poor and the powerless—are demanding and must have involvement in our schools."

The concept of local control, now so popular, first became respectable when the Ford Foundation embraced it in a now-famous report by McGeorge Bundy. This report, written in the wake of the I.S. 201 crisis, called for the restructuring of New York City's educational system, the restriction of the power of the central board, and the creation of a number of independent and local boards.

The document, if widely accepted across the country, would wipe out the last strongholds of Protestant political power in the big cities, thus completing a process begun in the 1930's. At the present time, school boards are made up as if they were political states, with ethnic representation carefully balanced against business and labor; thus, they resemble the cities' power structures more than their populations. Both Protestants and Irish Catholics are overrepresented. Jews, in the peculiar algebra that has made them "equal" Negroes, carry a burden both for themselves and for black children, while black interests remain underrepresented.

Blacks, however, have grown impatient with these old-fashioned and unresponsive arrangements. They point with anger to Washington, D.C., Chester, Pa., Wilmington, Newark, New Orleans, Richmond, Baltimore, East St. Louis and St. Louis, Gary, Philadelphia, Detroit, Atlanta, Cleveland, Memphis, Chicago and Oakland; all of which have a majority of Negro pupils in their public

schools and none of which have a majority or even near a majority of Negro school board members.

To by-pass these roadblocks to re-ordering the schools, Negroes have increasingly been using their very potent political power to dismantle the old systems and to create smaller local units within them. This struggle places blacks in daily confrontations with Jews. This demand means that the heavily Jewish school bureaucracies will have to give way, at least in the ghettos, to a Negro bureaucracy. Decentralization, however, does more than threaten the Jewish ethnic base; it also threatens the power of the Teachers' Union and the principles of seniority and job tenure.

Not surprisingly, the Bundy report, which legitimized black demands, has been viewed privately as anti-Semitic. It has been attacked publicly by both the Board of Rabbis and Herman Mantell, president of the Council of Jewish Organizations in Civil Service, which represents 26,000 members of the Jewish Teachers Association.

Undaunted, Mayor Lindsay accepted the report's major premises. On July 24, 1968, he announced that "the number one tension in our poor neighborhoods is the struggle for control of the schools." To relieve this tension, the mayor proposed transferring the central board's powers to the twenty-seven local school districts. To implement this plan, Lindsay appointed five new members to the central board, which had purposely been enlarged by the state legislature.

Among the mayor's new appointments was the Reverend Milton Galamison. It is a telling commentary that one of the men picked to work out a system of decentralization, which signifies the official abandonment of all serious attempts at integration, was once the man most frequently opposed to segregation. Not surprisingly, Galamison's chief opponent on the board turned out to be its former chairman, a sixty-two-year-old grandmother named Rose Shapiro. Mrs. Shapiro, a past president of the United Par-

ents Association, like most Jews, found the old-style public school system to be the ideal system, without emotionally recognizing that the new-style pupil is not a Jew but a Negro.

The fight for decentralization and community control was joined in New York City by the United Federation of Teachers. The area of combat, which began over who had the right to hire and fire teachers—the union said these matters are already defined by contract, the local boards declared that if they were to have any real purpose, their power must supersede such contracts—was quickly extended to a whole range of interracial and religious issues.

In the Ocean Hill–Brownsville demonstration district, the forces of black nationalism became inextricably intertwined with community control, and opposition to it was linked to Jewish defensiveness. The whole affair turned into a none-too-subtle expression of anti-Semitism and a byzantine kind of anti-blackism.

It all began on May 9, 1968, when the governing board of the experimental district set up in 1966 with Ford Foundation funds, acting on the powers purportedly granted to them by the New York City Board of Education, dismissed ten teachers from the district. It was later argued that the teachers had not in fact been fired but forced to transfer out of the area. The governing board's action caused shudders of apprehension among the vast majority of the system's other teachers. They reacted visceral: in a show of support, between seventy-five and 350 teachers in the local district boycotted their classes. When these sympathizers attempted to return to their classrooms, it was their turn to be locked out.

On August 22, 1968, at a rowdy, crowded Board of Education meeting, the Reverend C. Herbert Oliver, chairman of the Ocean Hill–Brownsville district governing board, requested the transfer of 315 of what he then claimed were 350 teachers who had engaged in the boy-

cott. At the same time, he submitted a list of 315 teachers "who wish to work in a district where there is local community control."

A week later, at the August 30 Board meeting, which was again marked by planned rowdiness and disorder, the split between the Board members who supported Reverend Oliver and those who opposed him was made clear. Chairwoman Shapiro accused Reverend Galamison of "a consistent campaign of sabotage and vilification of the Board." Many of the most outspoken members of the public who attended open Board meetings were members of the city-wide coalition for community control, headed up by board member Galamison. This fact led Mrs. Shapiro to further accuse the Reverend of encouraging "disorderly conduct of the members of the public who attend meetings." Not surprisingly, she classified "these disorders with those brought on by Communist and Nazi groups in Europe in the 1930's which undermined democratic institutions."

In the ensuing turmoil neither the issue of the ten nor of the 315 was really resolved. The following week, the Board adopted a decentralization plan which left unclarified the actual powers of the demonstration areas' governing boards and underestimated both the commitment of Reverend Oliver to confrontation politics and the determination of Teachers Union President Albert Shanker to protect union teachers.

On the heels of the plan's passage, Francis Rivers, a former civil court judge and a Negro, who served on the State Mediation Board, ruled that the ousted teachers be reinstated. He did not state, however, that they had to be returned to their classrooms.

Rhody McCoy, the black Administrator of Ocean Hill–Brownsville, accepted the verdict but refused to guarantee that the teachers would return to class. He said, "They will be brought back against our wishes. I cannot vouch for the physical safety of anyone."

Albert Shanker was dissatisfied. He opted for a strike to assure that teachers maintained all their rights in the decentralized areas. These included arrangements with regard to class size, sabbatical leave and lunch privileges. However, the primary concern was job security. As the record of the past showed, job tenure in New York City was almost equivalent to the right never to be fired. In a recent five-year period, only twelve out of nearly 60,000 teachers were dismissed. This speaks volumes about the low quality control in the system and did much, at least on the surface, to justify the demands of the Ocean Hill–Brownsville governing board.

The dispute, as Shanker saw it, was also a sink-or-swim matter involving the survival of the union. He noted that UFT membership in the disputed area had dropped from 90 to 50 percent, and he feared harassment against those who maintained union membership. "We must," he declared, "take a stand now in the incipient stages of decentralization or we will be unable to do so later."

On September 8, 1968, between 10 A.M. and 7 P.M., the union took a strike vote. During the balloting, the hall was picketed by parents, poverty workers and even teachers, not all of whom were black. Their signs read, "Don't Give Up, McCoy. We're with you 100%!!!" "We Give a Damn. Why Don't You Vote No?" and "Down with Shanker, Up with Education."

Among the whites who opposed the strike was Fred Herskowitz, an English teacher at I.S. 15 in the South Bronx, who stated, "The union has alienated itself from the parents, and the children are being destroyed by the current educational system. Maybe the dangers of repression are greater than the dangers of experimentation."

As teachers entered the building to cast their votes, they were greeted with chants of "If you don't come in Monday, don't come at all," which in translation meant, if you strike, don't ever come back.

The other side, too, had pickets which proclaimed such

slogans as "Support Freedom. Vote Yes." Despite the tension there was little public evidence of the anti-Semitism and racism that was shortly to bubble to the surface and overshadow the original issues in the dispute.

The teachers voted in overwhelming numbers to strike. On Monday, September 9, the first day of the fall term, 810 of the city's 900 public schools remained closed and 53,000 teachers failed to report for work. Only 50,000 of the 1,250,000 pupils were able to attend class.

In the Ocean Hill–Brownsville district, however, all eight schools were operating with a staff augmented by newly hired teachers, 70 percent of whom were white and 35 percent Jewish. The other two demonstration districts, one in East Harlem centering on Robert Lisser's old school, and the Two Bridges district in Lower Manhattan, where Michael Schwerner had once worked so hard, were also operating at near capacity.

The strike unquestionably aggravated the racial polarization of the city. In the Red Hook section of Brooklyn, black parents, students and mainly black nonstriking teachers forced officials to open P.S. 27 after demonstrations in which policemen were called "pigs" and "racist cops."

McCoy said that the strike was designed to perpetuate the essential failures of the educational system and the privileges of those who controlled it: "This is a strike which has aligned the UFT with racist elements in the society and has forced a disastrous confrontation."

Two days later, after negotiating what they believed to be an agreement to place all the disputed teachers in their original classrooms, the teachers voted to end the strike. They did not take into account the black power forces on the Ocean Hill–Brownsville governing board. Infuriated by what they believed to be a complete betrayal of the promise of local control, which they defined as the power to hire and fire teachers and to have full budgetary con-

trol over the construction and maintenance of school buildings, a group of demonstrators blocked the disputed teachers' entrance to I.S. 271. The police finally escorted the teachers inside, where the union charged they were subject to further harassment.

Meanwhile, in the Ocean Hill–Brownsville I.S. 55, UFT teachers were ordered into the school auditorium, where they found themselves surrounded by fifty blacks, some of whom were carrying sticks or wearing helmets and bandoleers of bullets. When Administrator McCoy entered the room to address the teachers, the men jeered him. After he left, the lights flickered on and off and the teachers were told they would be carried out in pine boxes. Finally, McCoy returned and told them to report to their schools at one o'clock.

As a result, a second strike was called and the then State Commissioner of Education, James E. Allen, ordered the Board of Education to suspend the Ocean Hill–Brownsville governing board and to transfer the ten disputed teachers out of the district.

This solution satisfied no one. A week later, in an effort to reopen the schools, the city Board, with Allen's approval, lifted the suspension of the governing board and ordered all the teachers back to their old posts. This included not only the disputed ten, but their sympathizers, who had shrunk in number from 350 to 110. The others had either quit the system or transferred voluntarily out of the district. To sweeten the medicine, the Board reversed a previous order and allowed Ocean Hill–Brownsville to keep the teachers it had hired to replace those in dispute. The governing board refused.

On September 30, amid ominous portents, the teachers reported for work assuming that the Ocean Hill–Brownsville district would carry out the court, city and state orders to reinstate all teachers to their classrooms, despite McCoy's words to the contrary.

What no one seemed to realize was that even if McCoy had wanted to carry out these orders, it was beyond his power to do so. The strike had radicalized the Ocean Hill–Brownsville community to the point of absolute defiance, and if McCoy was to maintain his leadership he had to defy the Teachers Union, the board of education, the mayor, state education officials and the courts.

The result was that when the schools opened for the second time since the original September strike, union teachers were once again barred from entering I.S. 271. Nine persons were arrested and ten persons injured in the teachers' attempt to enter the school.

Again the governing board was suspended. Again McCoy breathed defiance. He, too, was relieved of his duties along with seven of the district's principals. The militants' response was two days of rioting at I.S. 271. The Board then reinstated the principals, and the union voted to strike for a second time.

By October 21, matters had escalated to the point where the union was demanding, as a condition for ending the strike, the dissolution of the Ocean Hill–Brownsville governing board and the dismissal of seven of the area's eight principals.

In the meantime, it had not escaped the attention of the militants that the preponderant number of disputed teachers, as well as the preponderant number of striking white teachers, were Jewish and that the union membership and leadership was largely Jewish. Leaflets began to appear on the streets and in parents' mailboxes, railing against both whites and Jews. Some were signed by a so-called "I.S. 271 Parent Community Council."

The union picked up the anti-white leaflet of the fall and combined it with an openly anti-Semitic one circulated in the spring, which called Jews "Middle-East murderers," and gave these materials wide publicity in an effort to gain sympathy for the union's cause. At that time,

there was no evidence of a connection between the anti-Jewish literature and the Ocean Hill–Brownsville governing board. McCoy, however, never bothered to strongly denounce the clearly growing anti-Semitic tone of his militant allies.

Thoroughly aroused, middle-class parents, who were mainly white and Jewish, converged on Governor Rockefeller's New York City office and demanded the strike be ended by enforcing the agreements made with the union.

On November 15, the appellate division of the courts upheld a union suit to oust the principals appointed by the demonstration districts; two days later, the teachers voted to return to work after the state undertook a receivership for the Ocean Hill–Brownsville area.

Sporadic disruptions continued in the district despite the receivership. They were sparked by militants who opposed the settlement. By December 8, the disturbances had spread to East Harlem, where David Spencer, Stanley Lisser's old antagonist, was serving as chairman of that area's demonstration governing board. Barricades actually appeared in the streets in front of P.S. 39, which had been closed by a student boycott after seven union teachers entered the building on November 29 under heavy police escort.

Spencer charged the seven teachers with insubordination. They, unlike the bulk of the teachers in the school, had observed the strike, and at its termination they returned to their classes unmolested. However, they had attempted to make up for lost strike time by working the Friday after Thanksgiving. Schools were open all over the New York area that day by order of the city Board. However, Spencer's board decided to ignore this ruling because the schools in the district had been functioning all during the strike and had no need to make up time.

To enforce their decision and bolster the prestige and power of the East Harlem governing board, District Ad-

ministrator Charles Wilson aided the boycott by locking out the teachers permanently.

One of the teachers at P.S. 39 said that she believed the real source of the boycott and subsequent harassment was "not the local parents whom I have known for years on a personal basis, but a small traveling community of agitators."

"Many of the parents," said twenty-four-year-old Susan Jaffee, another teacher in the school, "have told me they were afraid to speak out because they feared reprisals from the small militant group that organized the boycott."

By December 12, the police had broken up the sit-ins at P.S. 39 and had arrested David Spencer. In retaliation, Jesse Gray, the leader of a series of rent strikes in Harlem in the early 1960's, organized a rally in opposition to the union teachers at the school. There, he handed out a leaflet entitled *Shanker, This Is Not Egypt, You Cannot Come In Here*. Part of the text read: "Zionists kill black people in their own land in the Middle East. They run the people out of their communities. . . . Harlem will not stand by while these racist, ruthless Zionist bandits and their puppets, the police, run us out of our community."

The response from the Jewish community was swift, even if it was not very effective. Four days later a Woodmere, Long Island, synagogue canceled a lecture by Floyd McKissick on black power and the Jewish response. The day after Christmas the racist and religious undercurrent exploded when Leslie Campbell, a twenty-nine-year-old black militant teacher at I.S. 271 who had been suspended for harassing union teachers, was heard on the controversial Julius Lester radio show. He read a poem supposedly written by a fifteen-year-old black student. Its opening lines were:

Hey, Jew boy, with that yarmulka on your head
You Pale-faced Jew boy—I wish you were dead!

It continued:

When the U.N. made Israel a free independent state
Little four- and five-year-old boys threw hand grenades,
They hated the black Arabs with all their might
And you, Jew boy, said it was all all right.
They came to America, land of the free,
And took over the school system to perpetuate white supremacy.

The poem's content—in particular, its linking of the Arab-Israeli war, white supremacy and the school crisis—was remarkably similar to an editorial that appeared in the January 1969 issue of the *African-American Teachers' Journal*. The reaction to Campbell's reading was immediate and overwhelming. In response to heavy pressure from the city's Jewish community, Mayor Lindsay called for an investigation of Campbell. Meanwhile the union filed a formal protest with the FCC against radio station WBAI-FM, which broadcast the Lester Show.

Albert Vann, a colleague of Campbell's at I.S. 271 and a fellow member of the Afro-American Teachers' Association, who had also been suspended for harassing union teachers, jumped to Campbell's defense. "The poem," he said, "while critical of Jews, has no anti-Semitic overtones. Poems critical of blacks," he added without amplification, "are taught daily. Are Jews beyond criticism? We don't think so. Any people who persecute black people will be criticized by blacks." Vann went on to accuse Lindsay of appeasing "the powerful Jewish financial interests of the city."

In a flash, the union and the Jewish community demanded Vann's scalp along with Campbell's. Both were stoutly defended by McCoy, and ironically protected by the rigid tenure rules of the union's contract. Undaunted, the Jewish Defense League went to court to obtain an injunction against Campbell and Vann.

By the beginning of 1969, it was clear that the experi-

ment in community control originally conceived by the Ford Foundation was doomed. Although the New York City school system was decentralized by the Legislature in 1970, great concern still exists over the allocation of the crucial powers of hiring, firing and budget control. The events of the fall and winter of 1968 have also accelerated the departure of middle-class children of all races and nationalities from the system, and have kept open the wounds between the city's Negroes and Jews.

On January 23, 1969, the B'nai B'rith, which had earlier absolved the Ocean Hill–Brownsville board of distributing anti-Semitic literature, despite the claims to the contrary by the union, issued a fresh report. Its burden was that a crisis-level anti-Semitism had been created in the wake of the decentralization dispute, and that the problem had been building up for two years.

The report documented the activities of both the Brooklyn and Queens CORE chapters since 1967 in their attempts to frighten Jewish school administrators. It cited the following statements made by CORE: "The Germans in Germany killed you Jews because you tried to control the economy of Germany and that is what you are trying to do to the black man in the United States. . . . The Germans did not do a good enough job with you Jews. . . . We are technically at war with you."

The B'nai B'rith further accused the Board of Education of remaining silent in the face of a multitude of anti-Jewish statements uttered in public hearings over a period of two and a half years.

The problems so nakedly revealed by the New York school strike are by no means confined to that city alone. In Philadelphia, for example, a new grammar school is planned for the Center City area which will combine pupils from two already-existing grammar schools. The pupils are from diverse economic and ethnic backgrounds. At their initial planning meetings the city's Board of Edu-

cation ran into difficulties that reflected in microcosm the struggles in New York.

At the first of these meetings, the district superintendent announced, "I am your servant. Feel free to be as creative as you can." The school, he repeatedly assured the gathering, would have pedagogical methods and curriculum and perhaps even a staff selected by "the community." These statements were made despite the fact that the building was being constructed for team teaching, a method of instruction which places up to four normal-sized classrooms in one large area and breaks the students into constantly changing small groups for different subjects of study. The idea is to present teachers with homogeneous groups of children without formally segregating classes into slow and fast learners. It is a controversial teaching tool that many parents, if given a choice, might well reject. The board was not really offering the parents or "community" a choice but insisted that it was.

The meetings themselves were fraught with difficulty. The middle-class parents, a mixed contingent of Jews, Protestants, Negroes and German Catholics, turned out in force for all four meetings. The low-income Negro parents were sparse and showed no continuity in their attendance. The black school had never had a Home and School Association and the parents, naturally timid, had been literally pushed away from the school by a series of Negro principals who treated them with disdain.

To substitute for the elusive parents, the district supervisor suggested the committee be broadened to include "the community." The designated black civic and business groups did not bother to attend and the representative sent by the YWCA, a young lady on their staff who had no children and did not live in the area, was an activist who brought with her James Lester, a wandering street-corner "speaker" who had been operating in the neighborhood for a little over a year, in space paid for by

white liberals, many of whom are Jewish. From his headquarters Lester arrived, accompanied by from two to ten teen-age companions. Once he arrived, he dominated the proceedings by delivering nonstop monologues on the evils of whiteness and integration. All his presentations carried veiled threats of physical violence for those who might happen to disagree with him.

Lester completely took over the school planning meetings and in the process, frightened away the few low-income black parents who did attend. He was supported in his tirades against whites, Jews, the political system, middle-class values and the general "trixology" practiced in the United States, by an $18,000 a year official of the Board of Education's inter-group office, whose task was supposed to be to facilitate integration.

These disruptions resulted in a withdrawal by the middle-class parents of both races, who firmly announced that though they wished to meet with the parents of children in the black school, they would have no more to do with "the spokesmen for the community."

Some of the middle-class parents were aware of the fact that the school inter-group officer had been a participant the previous summer in a black conference whose subject was control of schools within the black community. The conference had been led by Nathan Hare, the young director of the black studies program at San Francisco State College. Hare was a leader in that school's demonstrations in the fall of 1968.

The conference, which had been held in a Philadelphia public school with the consent of the Board of Education, produced an inflammatory set of guidelines. Among the conference notes are statements such as, "The concept of integration should be replaced by one of Black Control . . . struggle is an integral part of the nation-building concept." It continued to advocate that black control should be directed at deliberately "undermining

those actions by the system which are not designed and initiated by Black People. Do not cooperate in order to force face-to-face confrontation and to develop local will. Perceive the existing system as being incompatible with the thriving survival of Black People . . . the composition of the governing boards of Black controlled schools involves parents, students, community leaders and teachers of the truly Black variety." To achieve these ends, black-precipitated crises were recommended.

The major goal of these militants in the public schools is to gain control of the system by driving out not only white teachers but white students. All means, including anti-Semitism, are considered fair. Said CORE Director Roy Innis, "A black leader would be crazy to publicly repudiate anti-Semitism . . ."

Although the great majority of Negroes still desire an open educational system, they have increasingly begun to adopt both the goals of the black nationalists and their anti-Semitic lingo. The fact that Negro militants have found it opportune, on occasion, to inveigh against Jews has helped make anti-Semitism a street issue.

The Jews, in turn, have often understood this use of anti-Semitism but have nonetheless bitterly resented it. The result of their resentment has often been a turning away of Jews from Negroes' legitimate calls. This turning away could easily lead to the complete abandonment by the whites of the central-city public schools—an abandonment that would necessarily include the withdrawal of tax support.

In the early part of the twentieth century, public education had the backing of a coalition of trade unions, businessmen and ethnic groups. This coalition has broken down. There are far fewer powerful interests committed to public education than there were fifty years ago. In fact, the Jews are one of the last groups of whites who are

still concerned with in-city schools. Their departure from the scene could be the signal for the resurrection in the North of the system that once prevailed in the South.

Without the sudden and unforeseen demise of the parochial and private school systems, or the creation of regional school districts to include white suburbanites, it is hard to envision how black city schools can avoid the fate of the burnt-out stars in the heavens known as black dwarfs. Like these astronomical bodies, they will be burdened with such a gravitational weight of problems that light from the outside will be unable to force its way in, while the inner light will not be allowed to radiate. Blind and invisible, the schools may just end up existing in an uncaring universe.

15

RIOTS AND POGROMS

Hours after Martin Luther King's death on April 4, 1968, disturbances broke out in more than a hundred cities across the country. During the week of April 4–11, major riots occurred in Washington, D.C., Chicago, Kansas City, Pittsburgh, Memphis and Baltimore. More than forty-two persons were killed in these disorders. The great majority of the victims were Negro. The outbreaks marked the fifth year of violent upheaval in American cities. What had at first seemed a series of senseless and criminal deeds were clearly revealed as instinctual political acts.

The rampage of looting and burning in the nation's capital took nine lives—eight black and one white—injured 200 people and destroyed or damaged 900 businesses. In a way, Washington's experience brought into perspective all the big-city riots that had preceded it and predicted much of what can be expected to follow.

Unlike previous racial disorders, disturbances broke out almost simultaneously in two sections of the city. In the Northwest quadrant, only two blocks from the White House, buildings were burned and stores looted. On the other side of town, in a plot bounded by West Virginia Avenue, Maryland Avenue, 8th Street Northeast and 14th Street Northwest, the havoc was duplicated. There was no single local event that set off the turmoil that caused the 13.3 million dollars' worth of damage; rather, crowds seemed to gather spontaneously after news of Dr. King's assassination reached them.

The havoc that began in the dark hours of Thursday night, April 4, continued in the daylight hours throughout the weekend. Although a large number of gutted stores were owned by Jews, many of the victims were the new class of small Negro merchants. In one area, of the seventeen businesses hit in the block, eleven were owned by Negroes. They included a barber shop, a dry cleaners, and Taylor's Radio and TV repair store. Another Negro victim was a doctor whose office was demolished. The remainder were, with the exception of a Greek immigrant who owned a small restaurant, Jews. Their businesses were far more substantial than those operated by blacks. However, because they could afford insurance, their losses were far less than the blacks who were almost completely wiped out.

Commenting on the damage, Rufus (Catfish) Mayfield, a former youth worker, said, "The idea of burning, man, was to destroy what the white man stood for." Mayfield, who made no claim to being an arsonist, tried to explain the behavior of those who were.

"I might have had the impulse to burn; a man can just restock his store and raise his prices if it's just looting. If he's burned out . . ." Mayfield shrugged his shoulders, then added worriedly, "I don't think the cats really knew how drastic the fires would be."

James Foreman, the sixty-seven-year-old Negro pro-

prietor of the burned-out barber shop at 708 S Street, had no such political overview. "I just can't figure this all out. It'll just lead to more prejudice. It just doesn't make sense to destroy your own people who were trying to be self-supporting."

Abraham Zevin, who along with his father ran a hardware store at 1742 7th Street, was equally disturbed. Sitting in his comfortable suburban living room, he said, "I didn't go home every night after work and say 'God, I'm glad to be away from there.' But I wouldn't think of going back into business there now, either." Then, reflecting on the demolition of his store, he added, "A high-level decision was reached to save lives during the rioting, and that's right; lives can't be replaced. But we [referring to the businessmen] were offered up as sacrificial lambs."

Mayfield, Foreman and Zevin each spoke lines that had been read before by players in the street dramas of 1964, '65, '66 and '67 called Harlem, Bedford-Stuyvesant, Jersey City, Elizabeth, Paterson, Rochester, Philadelphia, Bogalusa, Watts, Nashville, Tampa, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Chicago, Boston, Atlanta, Newark and Detroit. Before the tragedy of the black insurrection ends, the same lines will be spoken in other cities and towns. They will be said everywhere that poor Negroes are crowded in upon themselves in the new urban world.

Nonetheless, the Washington outbreak and its numerous counterparts across the country marked a turning point. It was no longer possible to deny the political intent behind the riots or to miss their message. Local excuses were no longer needed to fill the streets with rampaging blacks. This response to the national loss—the assassination of Martin Luther King—signaled the end of the reflex acts of mayhem and the beginning of conscious acts of rebellion. It may be cited historically as the beginning of the period of urban guerrilla warfare so long heralded by black militants and radical white New Leftists.

The pattern of riots in America, when viewed in retro-

spect, can be seen as having escalated in size, ferocity and number with each succeeding year. In the minds of their perpetrators, the riots have moved from frenzied, inchoate violence to sharply delineated acts of revolution. The instant and massive coverage the news media has given to their most militant spokesmen has tended not only to increase the violence but to legitimize it. The rioters gain a certain status by their appearance on TV. Looters and cameramen have together produced the little tableaux for the benefit of the home audience. By the summer of 1970, however, the violence in Asbury Park, N. J., New Bedford, Mass., and Cairo, Ill., which a short time ago would have captured the full attention of the media for days on end, had become commonplace.

Many of these recent disorders, which seemed to have begun so abruptly, actually had their prelude in the interracial violence of 1963 and early 1964. Frequently forgotten, or never connected with the drama of these urban outbreaks, are the brutal acts of white racists that first received widespread publicity in 1963. Then, in Birmingham, Alabama, police used dogs, fire hoses and cattle prods on Negroes, many of whom were children, when they peacefully demonstrated against segregation. The police attacks were seen on national TV and viewed in the ghettos where the ratio of television sets to families is as high as anywhere in the country.

Newspapers also gave coverage to white racists when they shot at Negroes; the press publicized the bombing of the Gaston Motel, where Dr. King was staying, as well as the attempt to blow up the home of Dr. King's brother. The denouement came on a quiet Sunday morning. Four little girls attending religious classes in a Birmingham church were killed when a bomb exploded.

The blacks in the city retaliated for the first time by burning white-owned businesses in their neighborhoods. These avengers, however, were not part of the non-violent demonstrations of Martin Luther King and wanted no

part of them. When the Birmingham police came to the scene of the action, the residents threw rocks and bottles. Instead of opening fire, the cops ran for cover. The repercussions of these incidents were widespread. In Chicago a few days later, two Negroes assaulted Mayor Daley's eighteen-year-old nephew shouting, "This is for Birmingham."

In Jacksonville, Florida, in the spring of 1964, the arrest and conviction of civil rights demonstrators provoked more violence. A shot fired from a passing car killed a Negro woman. Later a bomb threat forced evacuation of an all-Negro high school. The students took revenge by stoning policemen and firemen.

In Cleveland, a bulldozer accidentally ran over a white minister at a demonstration. Disorder took over when police moved in to disperse the largely Negro crowd.

In June, segregationists broke through police lines in St. Augustine, Florida, and attacked civil rights workers. In Philadelphia, Mississippi, three law enforcement officers were indicted for the murders of Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman and James Chaney. The following month a Ku Klux Klansman killed a Negro army colonel in Georgia.

Unlike the violence in the South and in Cleveland, which was a personal and interracial reaction, the Northern city riots found the blacks the aggressors. Their targets were the symbols of white authority—the police and property. Major incidents in 1964 all took place on weekend nights in New York, Jersey City, Elizabeth, Paterson, Rochester, Chicago and Philadelphia, and were heralded by rumors of impending disaster. Triggered by police incidents, they occurred in areas where there were large concentrations of bars and great numbers of people who had consumed at least enough alcohol to release inhibitions.

The instigating incidents created great and often inappropriate rage. The crowd moved first to physically attack the police. Looting came later. Immediately following the first flare-up, rumors rapidly spread through the potential

riot areas. They usually bore little resemblance to the actual event but rather seemed to summarize the most basic fears of the Negro community.

In many ways the turbulence in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in August 1964, best exemplifies this first generation of disorders. In that city the igniting incident, on August 28, was a complaint received by two police officers about a car blocking the three-way intersection between 22nd Street, Columbia Avenue and Ridge Avenue. Flanking the juncture, which is the hub of North Philadelphia's black strip, were six taprooms, all of which had at one time or another been cited for violating the law regarding service to minors and/or serving as places of assignation, numbers racket pickup spots or gathering places for dope peddlers.

The night of August 28 was hot and a large number of people were outdoors. In a parked car in the center of the street, Mrs. Odessa Bradford was quarreling with her husband, Rush. Both were drunk. At one point, Mr. Bradford got out of the car to view the long line of stalled traffic. He was there when the police arrived. Failing in attempts to persuade Mrs. Bradford to move the car, the policemen attempted to remove her from it. She resisted, shouting and striking the officers. The corner loungers came to her rescue and the melee began.

Rumors spread up and down Columbia Avenue. In them Mrs. Bradford was transformed into a sober pregnant woman who was shot in the stomach by a white policeman and killed. The rumor brought still more people out. Policemen responding to the officers' calls found themselves assailed by bricks and bottles. A glass storefront window was broken and the looting began.

The mood of the crowd shifted rapidly from rage to festivity. Later in the night, "leading Negroes" appeared on the scene and attempted to persuade the people to go home. They were greeted with derision. Those that the mobs did listen to were indigenous inciters like Shaykh

Muhammad Ali Hussan, also known as Abyssinia Hayes, who, attired in white jodphurs, a green and gold fez, and a single dangling black earring, jumped up and down alternately screaming obscenities and "We want freedom!"

The white nation was astonished. They could find no precedents for the first long hot summer of 1964. But of course there were precedents. The Harlem riot of 1935 foreshadowed the 1964 violence in almost every detail.

In re-creating this event, Ralph Ellison, in his novel *Invisible Man,* invented a character named Ras the Destroyer, who might well have been a model for the real Abyssinia Hayes. Dressed in what he believed to be an Ethiopian chieftain's garb, the fictional creature shouted, "Destroy 'em! Drive 'em out! Burn 'em out. I, Ras, command you."

Ellison, too, captured the mood of the black crowds. Harlem, Brooklyn, Rochester, Paterson, Chicago and Philadelphia and Asbury Park. "I was," his narrator stated, "seized with a fierce sense of exaltation. . . . I was one with the mass moving down the littered street over puddles of oil and milk. My personality blasted. I moved feeling as though a huge force was on the point of bursting."

In Ellison's novel, as later in life, even onlookers glorified the violence:

> "Ain't this some night. . . ."
>
> "It's fulla fucking and fighting and drinking and lying."
>
> "Yeah but tonight I seen things I never seen before."

These remarks were repeated in Detroit in 1967 when a real rioter described his emotions to an interviewer. "I was feeling proud, man, at the fact that I was a Negro. I felt like a first-class citizen. I didn't feel ashamed of my race because of what they did."

More important than shocking white America, the passion of black America exposed for the first time the real

condition of life in the ghetto. It also revealed the inadequacies of civil rights legislation and of the civil rights movement. By and large, 1964 inspired more white sorrow than anger, for when the riots were over and the time for assessment had come, it was the Jewish grocers, merchants and taproom owners in the ghetto who had suffered. Although no observers at any of these first series of riots recall hearing anti-Jewish slogans, the Jews nonetheless read a kind of anti-Semitism into the fact that a majority of the white victims were Jews.

Until the riots the larger Jewish community had no doubt been ignorant of the extent of the Jewish presence in the Negro slums. Or perhaps they had only been sub-

sh, for some knowl-
of the pogrom. Jews,
is so characteristic
nediately perceived,
admit it, the strong
ole played by their
d the role played by
dparents in the old

in Jewish minds by
cularly in Philadel-
were given a higher
wish merchants, al-
ew, felt that if the
establishment in the
would have been re-
hat city officials were
fusing to shoot loot-

merchants were the
part of either the
reaucrats. "There is
ish feelings were a

ghetto landlords were frequently Jewi
edge prompted them to see the simile c
with that shock of recognition which
of their cultural psyche, almost imm
though they refused at first to publicly
resemblance between the dominant r
counterparts in the black economy an
their East European parents or gran
world vis-à-vis the peasants.

The simile was further re-enforced
the fact that in most cities, and parti
phia in that first summer, Negro lives
value than Jewish property. The Je
though not usually a bloodthirsty cr
blacks had attacked the stores of the e
central business cores, the priorities w
versed. Some even voiced the feeling th
somehow sanctioning the attacks by re
ers.

Contrapuntal to the wails of the
denials of anti-Jewish intent on the
rioters or the city politicians and bu
no reason to conclude that anti-Jew

real motivating cause," said the late Jules Cohen, director of Philadelphia's Jewish Community Relations Council at the time of that city's troubles. "Some Negro stores were broken into and stores and taprooms owned by non-Jewish whites were also damaged. Of course the majority of those affected were Jews because a majority of the businessmen in the area are Jewish. The riots are the result of long pent-up frustration by Negroes who lack the ability to take part in the civil rights movement or to benefit from its achievements. Most Negroes," he concluded, "were humiliated by the outbursts and some tried to make restitution to the shopkeepers."

Cohen's assumptions about black attitudes were based on his conversations with Negroes in the professional class who had a greater stake in maintaining the clichés of brotherhood than in facing the truth.

Jews, by their persistent public denials of Jewish culpability and anti-Jewish backlash among the blacks, actually helped to pinpoint the Jewish role in the ghetto and served to focus black anger on it. Jews who lived in close contact with Negroes watched with alarm the increasing number of black assaults. In the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, the Hasids, who were aware of the inability of the police to protect them, formed a volunteer security force of their own. The sight of these living symbols of the passive, fatalistic Jew defending themselves against their Negro tormentors reveals how confident American Jews are of their place in the New World. Without disturbing their ancient rituals, they reversed their historic role.

As the second, third and fourth summers of violence followed rapidly upon the first, black hostility toward Jews became more obvious. Increasingly intermingled with the cries of rage against whitey were words of hatred reserved just for the Jew. Unlike the disorders of 1964, the troubles of 1965–1967 were not completely lacking in self-consciousness. The second series of outbreaks, which be-

gan with Watts and ended in Detroit, differed both qualitatively and quantitatively from the first. Its rhetoric was that of anarchy if not yet of revolution.

"Burn, baby, burn" became the slogan of those years. Originated innocently by a Negro Los Angeles disc jockey known as Magnificent Montague, the phrase seemed to sum up the mood of the ghetto. Begun as a synonym for "Dig it," "cool it," "what's happening," and "get yourself together," on the Magnificent's weekday morning rock-'n-roll show, it became the rallying cry for arsonists and looters.

The riots that began in Watts were preceded by a succession of smaller but significant incidents. On April 11, 1965, a policeman was knocked unconscious when the windows of two patrol cars were smashed by a mob of youths following the ejection of a drunken young Negro from a Jefferson High School track meet in Los Angeles. On April 27, a gang of Negroes ran through the halls of a Los Angeles's Central Receiving Hospital. They were acting on a rumor that a Negro injured in an auto collision was receiving inferior treatment. Then, early on the evening of August 11, a spark landed on a pile of hate-fed tinder and Watts went up in flames. This particular incident involved Margarette and Ronald Frye, stepbrothers who were arrested for drunken driving following an afternoon of dalliance. Stopped between 119th and 120th streets on Avalon Boulevard, the Fryes were unwilling prisoners. Their protests brought crowds of people to the site of the dispute. The onlookers, naturally antagonistic to the police and encouraged by a year of television reportage of Negroes on the offensive, had no hesitation in coming to the aid of the stepbrothers. The result was six days of rioting that included for the first time since Birmingham the deliberate burning of stores owned by white men. The casualties both to property and to person were greater than all of the incidents of 1964 put together.

Watts, unlike previous riot sites, had never been a Jew-

ish residential neighborhood. It had from the first been occupied by poor Negroes. Nonetheless its economic life was governed by Jews, a fact that was brought forcefully home by the openly anti-Jewish declarations of many of the residents.

Differentiating Watts from its East Coast antecedents was not only the openness of the hostility toward the Jews, but the appearance of a new chorus of black voices very unlike those of the "leading Negroes" who had attempted to speak for black men the year before. These spokesmen were not humiliated by violence but publicly extolled it.

Unlike street-corner preachers such as Abyssinia Hayes, this new breed of person was neither indigenous nor spontaneous. He was instead an educated, articulate outsider. His commitment to the cause was produced not by the emotional disturbances brought about by life lived on the bottom, but was the end product of a number of intellectual and political decisions. The new voices most loudly heard were those of Stokely Carmichael and H. Rap Brown—the voices of the black intelligentsia.

In late January and early February 1967, Chicago was crippled by a succession of heavy snowstorms. Accompanying the blizzards were reports of an unusually high number of thefts. It soon became apparent that these were not ordinary burglaries but were in fact acts of looting. The site of the action was the same neighborhood where Negroes had rampaged the summer before. In fact, the same blocks and the same stores, owned largely by Jews on Roosevelt Road, which had been the targets in 1966, were again victimized in 1967. Police correctly concluded that these new incidents were merely extensions of the riots that had shaken Chicago every summer since 1964. The winter action, however, broadened the possibilities of urban violence and justifiably escalated the already substantial fears of the Jewish ghetto businessmen.

Following the trouble in Chicago, agitation began on Negro college campuses in Nashville, Jackson and Houston.

The disorders created by these demonstrations quickly spread into the areas surrounding the colleges. Once out on the street the pattern of looting and random destruction reappeared. But the genesis of these disorders in student protests made it increasingly obvious that the riots were less motivated by a desire for goods than by a longing to demonstrate power—by humbling the business community, intimidating the police, and forcing the government to respond.

Later in the spring and early summer of 1967 gangs of roving Negro youths provoked riots in Cincinnati, Dayton, Boston and Tampa. Interestingly, it was in the Southern city of Tampa that the white political establishment first recognized the leadership of indigenous black militants and attempted to make peace with them. Upon the promise of a group of Negro teen-agers who had formed themselves into the Youth Patrol to "cool it," Sheriff Malcome E. Beard ordered the withdrawal of the National Guard.

Meanwhile in Atlanta, Georgia, the word "honky" was given a nationwide airing by Stokely Carmichael, who came to speak to a gathering in St. Joseph's Church. Carmichael, a veteran of SNCC's Southern voter-registration drives in the early sixties, declared "the era of non-violence is dead. The only way these honkies and honky lovers can understand is when they are met by resistance."

The cult of violence was born. Its rhetoric was to become the lexicon of all who presumed to speak for the poor black man. Martin Luther King's non-violence was replaced by the theory of Frantz Fanon, the Negro psychiatrist from Martinique who became the philosopher of the Algerian revolt against French colonialism. Fanon conceived of violence as a great cleansing force. Although he never addressed himself directly to the United States, his theories have been taken up by many militant American intellectuals, both black and white.

The new call to violence has great appeal to black men. Both in the old South and the new North it is synonymous

cummity. To be violent in black folklore is to be
he "bad nigger," as Claude Brown pointed out, is
eal and an archetypal figure in the matriarchal
ommunity. He is the measure of manhood for
n. It is an ideal completely at variance with the
leal. Jews look not to roustabouts but scholars,
mps, pushers and numbers men but to successful
nen. They pride themselves on brains, not brawn.
k rhetoric of violence is not only incomprehen-
hem but, coupled with attacks on Jewish ghetto
is perceived as anti-Semitic even if Jews are
ntioned.

chael's speech in Atlanta that hot day played on
e of violence as a test of manhood. It excited his
. Many of the teen-agers left the church and went
o a shopping center a block away that had been
e of several confrontations between police and
Inspired by Carmichael's slogans—"Turn this
und, turn this town upside down, burn this town
they began hurling stones at the police.

the police responded by firing shots into the air,
d dispersed. However, it came back the next
his time, according to police records, at least one
cocktail was hurled. The police, alarmed by the
le fire bomb, lowered their sights and shot into
d. A Negro boy was killed. The incident turned
t. It was one of the forty-seven disorders reported
st nine months of 1967.

Newark's time came, the rhetoric had advanced
nere cries of anarchy into calls for revolution.
yden, the white ex-Catholic who founded the
tudents for a Democratic Society (SDS), chronicled
ening in New Jersey's largest city in a book en-
bellion in Newark: Official Violence and Ghetto
. In it, Hayden created a revolutionary frame-
o which he poured the data about street disorder.
the fact that the framework was largely an intel-

with mas
a man. T
both a r
Negro co
black me
Jewish i
not to pi
business
The blac
sible to
property
never me

Carmi
the them
audience
directly
the scen
Negroes.
town aro
down"—

When
the crow
night. T
Molotov
homema
the crow
into a ri
in the fir

When
beyond
Tom Ha
radical S
the happ
titled *Re*
Response
work int
Despite

lectual conceit, it won widespread acceptance in both militant black and white radical circles.

Books such as Hayden's have convinced the American Jewish Committee's Urban Affairs specialist Irving Levine that large-scale city guerrilla warfare is a real possibility. Yet for all of Hayden's romanticism his work reveals some hard facts. Negroes, he pointed out, represented 50 percent of the population of Newark at the time of the riot, yet had no real political power. In the weeks preceding the riots two issues brought this impotence home to the black population: the first concerned education, the second urban renewal.

When former Mayor Hugh Addonzio, who figured in a federal investigation of organized crime and was convicted in July of 1970 on sixty-four counts of extortion, appointed a white political hack to head the Newark Public School System, the black community was enraged. They had instead been expecting the selection of a well-qualified Negro. In protest, more than a thousand blacks disrupted the Board of Education meeting when the announcement was made. At the same time, another group of Negroes vigorously protested a Planning Board decision to bulldoze a large patch of the Negro ghetto and replace it with a medical school. The plan made no provision for relocating the Negroes who would be displaced.

The black citizens lost both battles and their leaders warned that Newark was on the verge of bloodshed. It came on July 14, when a black cabdriver, John Smith, was arrested for tailgating a police car. Despite the insignificance of the offense, Smith was badly beaten by the arresting officers.

The news about Smith was spread by Negro cabdrivers over their car radios. Others carried it through Hayes House, an all-black public housing project across the street from the police station where Smith was being held. In short order a crowd gathered outside the Fourth

Precinct. Rocks and bottles were thrown at the headquarters. Police charged the crowd and the riot began.

Shortly after the melee at the police station had begun, looting started. For the most part the early perpetrators of both actions were young boys. Nonetheless, they had the solid support of the older residents of Hayes House. As Hayden explained: "Fathers and mothers in the ghetto often complain that even they cannot understand the wildness of their kids . . . [their] refusal to obey authority . . . Yet when the riot broke out, the generations came together. The parents understood and approved the defiance of their sons that night." In fact, they stood with them in front of the police station and chanted, "Black Power, Black Power."

Hayden's analysis of Negro attitudes were backed up by Kerner Report studies. LeRoi Jones, the black playwright who lives in Newark and who took part in the "insurrection," later wrote poetry glorifying the event. Infused in the verse was the view of the "Jooish" merchant as a particular oppressor.

Detroit, following close on the heels of Newark, added a new dimension to Levine's prognostication of urban guerrilla warfare. In the automobile capital there were snipers who sought not only to kill white policemen but to actively and consciously expand the riot itself. With the appearance of snipers the disorders took a further step toward conscious if not yet deliberate insurrection. Three years later sniper attacks in the ghetto upon police and firemen had become routine assaults.

Newark and Detroit set the stage for the overtly political outbreaks in Washington, D.C., and other cities in April 1968, just as Washington provided the mood for the July events in Cleveland, Ohio. In Cleveland a riot was for the first time deliberately and successfully provoked by a Black Nationalist group. According to officials in Negro Mayor Carl Stokes administration, the trouble was set off

about 8:30 P.M. on Tuesday, July 23, when a tow truck was called to remove an abandoned Cadillac in the intersection between Auburndale and Lakeview avenues in a black section of older wood-frame houses and apartment buildings. Upon arriving at the site, which was only a stone's throw from Hough, the scene of riots in 1966, the tow-truck operator found himself engaged in an argument with an unidentified man who claimed to be the car's owner. Shots suddenly rang out from two directions. The tow-truck operator fell to the ground wounded and his assistant in the cab of the truck radioed police for help. In less than ten minutes a police car arrived and the officers in it were fired upon. As more police vehicles came on the scene the cross fire increased. The result was the death of three officers and the wounding of twelve others.

In addition to the policemen, at least seven civilians were killed in the cross fire, four of whom were later identified as black nationalists, and hundreds of rounds of ammunition were fired in the neighborhood. Within hours after the ambush, full-scale arson, looting and rioting were under way.

Two days later, on Thursday, July 25, a large crowd of blacks gathered at 125th Street and Superior Avenue at two in the afternoon to watch firemen pour water on the smoldering ruins of several damaged stores.

"The goddamn white devils were selling that rotten meat," an elderly Negro man muttered, as he pushed his way past a youthful white National Guardsman. "But they got to that devil," the man said smiling, "and they put a barbecuing on his goddamn rotten meat."

Arrested and charged with planning the ambush was Fred Ahmed Evans, a black nationalist who had gained minor local celebrity for his predictions of major national Negro uprisings. Evans, tall, bearded, thirty-six years old, wore African-style clothing, a skullcap, sunglasses and is a practicing astrologer. He had lost his store at 111th and Superior streets for non-payment of rent. The loss of the

establishment, which specialized in artifacts from Africa and had a sign over the door proclaiming the New Libya, was an embittering blow to Evans. The demise of what he referred to as Black Nationalist Headquarters moved him toward overt violence.

The example of the police ambush in Cleveland in which Evans was involved was picked up by other localities: In Newark, Negro terrorists unsuccessfully attempted to assassinate police chief Dominick Spina. In Harlem, two policemen were injured when their parked patrol car was struck by rifle bullets. In Pittsburgh, California, snipers wounded two persons and riddled police cars with bullets when the officers attempted to break up an unruly bottle-throwing crowd of seventy-five street-corner loungers. In San Francisco, two members of the city's Crime Commission ran into sniper fire when they arrived in the city's 1966 riot area. On August 8, 1968, three Negroes were killed in Miami, Florida, on the night Richard Nixon was nominated for President. The police said that two of the victims were snipers and were killed in a gun battle at 62nd Street in the black section of Miami known as Liberty City. In July of 1970, a black militant group called the Peoples Party secured the 2800 block of Dowling Street of Houston, Texas, and declared that policemen who ventured into the area would be shot. The result was a gun battle on the street in front of the party headquarters which ended in the death of twenty-one-year-old Carl Hampton, Chairman of the Peoples Party, and the wounding of three other blacks.

Having begun in 1964 as instinctual reactions to repression, the riots quickly became conscious reactions to accidental situations, then deliberate reactions to political events, and finally provoked outbreaks. Ghetto Jewish businessmen and their allies in the Jewish establishment, in contrast to young, rebellious Jewish intellectuals, however, continue to view these disorders as examples of black criminality rather than black social protest.

The black justification of violence is to them reminiscent of that expressed by the violent Christian cults of Europe that sprang up with the breakdown of the feudal system. Black militancy has in common with these earlier sects an eschatology of both apocalypse and of anti-Semitism. The Jew was not only anti-Christ, but Mr. Charlie. Yet, despite the increasing verbalism of anti-Jewish sentiments on the part of ghetto-dwellers and participants in street violence, the "black insurrection" differs in many significant ways from the anti-Semitic onslaughts in Europe.

In medieval times, attacks on Jews were made by those who were in opposition to the entrenched rulers. The leaders of these attacks were religious reformers and fanatics, distressed peasants and insurgent knights. The Jews were targeted because their enemies mistook their role as agents of royal and clerical power for that of their masters. The medieval attackers, unlike modern blacks, were interested in destroying Jews, not Jewish property. In later times, European anti-Jewish riots were government inspired.

American Negroes, unlike the peasants of the Russian pogroms and German clerks involved in the "final solution," have never mistaken the Jew for their real enemy, whom they perceive to be white society as a whole. Jews as such have never been the principal objects of black anger, although as victims Jewish ghetto businessmen and Jewish teachers find the distinction in the motivation of their antagonists irrelevant. Poor Negroes, unlike European peasants and petite bourgeoisie, do not view the murder of Jews as a desired end. Such action fails to fulfill either a realistic or a fantasized black goal.

Black riots, however, are not unique phenomena. They can be placed in a historical frame of reference. The United States has always been a violent society. Born in strife, it has lived in conflict, and the recent urban disorders are but the latest in a series of such expressions.

In 1786, for example, a group of hard-pressed farmers in western Massachusetts were resentful of new tax laws, so they seized the law courts and forced the state legislature to repeal them. In the 1840's and '50's the big cities of the East were shaken by bloody anti-Catholic riots. At the turn of the century, labor organizations were violently suppressed. The Pullman strike was put down by 16,000 federal troops. After World War I, whites attacked blacks all across the country.

Negroes, too, have a history of using group force against oppression. As far back as 1829 David Walker in Boston called for slave insurrections. Herbert Aptheker, a chronicler of Negro history, has found records of more than a hundred slave uprisings. Those headed by Denmark Vesey and Nat Turner were only the largest and best known. Although the race riots of the 1920's were instigated by white attacks on blacks, Negroes were actually secure enough for the first time to fight back and defend themselves against the onslaught. Black militants and black Marxists frequently like to point to not altogether appropriate parallels to ghetto unrest. Their analogies are to the colonial experience in Asia, Africa and South America. Their examples are Algeria, Cuba and Vietnam. SNCC, CORE, the Black Panthers, and the college-originated Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM) see ghetto unrest in the context of a worldwide color revolution.

As Eldridge Cleaver, Black Panther and former candidate for President on the Peace and Freedom party ticket, wrote in *Soul on Ice:*

> The link between America's undercover support of colonialism abroad and the bondage of the Negro at home becomes increasingly clearer . . . the New Left understands . . . that America's support of colonialism must be shattered before the resources and administrative machinery of the nation can be freed for the task of creating a truly free and humanistic society here at home. It is at this point, at the juncture of foreign policy and do-

mestic policy, that the Negro revolution becomes one with the world revolution. Those who most bitterly oppose Negro progress are also the most ardent advocates of a belligerent foreign policy. What the Negro now needs and consciously seeks is political and economic power. And ultimately we shall witness the merging of the Negro revolution with a broader movement demanding disarmament and conversion of the economy to peaceful purposes . . . the world capitalist system has come to a decisive fork in the road . . . the road to the left is the way of reconciliation . . . the road to the right . . . is to unleash worldwide genocide, including the extermination of American Negroes.

Cleaver then goes on to relate his political theory:

A strange thing happened in Watts in August of 1965. The blacks, who in this land of private property have all the private and no property, got excited . . . The blacks were running amuck . . . the police department was powerless to control them . . . out came the National Guard, that ambiguous hybrid from the twilight zone where the domestic army merges with the international . . . unleashing their formidable firepower they crushed the blacks. But things will never be the same again . . . A community of interest began to emerge, dripping with blood, out of the ashes of Watts . . . Violence becomes a homing pigeon floating through the ghettos seeking a black brain in which to roost for a season . . . It is no secret that in America the blacks are in total rebellion against the system.

A second and in some ways contradictory analogy favored in dark radical circles is that of the concentration camp. It, too, flows from the view of American Negroes as colonial subjects. Walter Palmer, Philadelphia's former Model Cities Community organizer and panjandrum of the Black People's Unity Movement, said, "We live in a police state: North Philadelphia is a concentration camp and the police are our guards."

Clarence Maloney, a 1962 cum laude graduate of Philadelphia's Temple University School of Business and a one-time community organizer for the League of Women Voters' Inner City Project, picked up Palmer's theme: "A lot of our leadership looks at society today and believes that it intends to destroy black people. I look at it that way myself and I consider myself a moderate. Our struggle is to prevent this destruction." Black unemployment, Maloney believes, "is a part of a plan of black genocide" in which "white liberals have the same function as missionaries; after them come the cats with the chains."

Oddly, though, few if any militants who believe in the concentration camp and genocide world-view carry the analogy to its logical conclusion and identify themselves with the Jews, nor do they compare the city riots with the Warsaw uprising of 1945. The Jewish example in the Diaspora is an unappealing one for militant Negroes, although it held strong attraction for Booker T. Washington. It is unattractive because for the two thousand years between the Jerusalem uprising in A.D. 68 and the Warsaw uprising, the Jews, like Negro Americans, with few exceptions were passive victims of malignant forces. In this sense Jewish history has little to offer blacks who are searching for a heroic mold.

The militants' postulation of urban guerrilla warfare, and the anarchistic and nihilistic vision of such men as Ahmed Evans and Abyssinia Hayes, do, however, have their roots in Western revolutionary philosophy. Throughout the career of the Russian anarchist Mikhail Bakunin, for example, runs the theme that bloodshed is a regenerative and liberating force, not only for society but for the individual. The fantastic philosophy of organized terrorism that guided Sergius Nechaev and other members of the People's Will party in pre-revolutionary Russia also seems in many ways parallel to the thought of the extremist black voices in such modern organizations as the Revolutionary Action Movement.

This vision of an American apocalypse was summed up by Walter Palmer when he said, "If the blacks live in a police state, then the whites are going to live in one, too. If blacks can't have their freedom and dignity, then we won't allow whites to have theirs either."

The growing escalation of planned political acts has tended to obscure the line between peaceful protest, acts of civil defiance, and acts of civil disorder. Civil rights demonstrations have blended into black power strikes; protests against the war in Vietnam have grown into deliberate acts of civil disobedience. And so the process goes: sit-ins become marches, marches turn into stall-ins, lock-outs and temporary invasions; riots that began with looting proceed to arson and are now accompanied by deliberate sniping. The politics of assassination has become a reality: while the militant black left threatens it, the paranoid white right practices it.

Marching in lock-step with the blacks, who in the past decade have moved from non-violence to retaliation, has been the peace movement. It, too, began in a low key with the teach-ins and then escalated into sit-ins, lock-outs, the march on the Pentagon, the moratoriums and wild street melees to protest the appearance of high government officials. In Chicago during the Democratic National Convention thousands of antiwar demonstrators taunted the police and were rewarded by a brutal assault. Briefly on the last day of the convention the radical whites and the war resistors were joined by the militant blacks and the poor blacks on the lawn in Grant Park across the street from the Hilton Hotel. It was a happy vision of peaceful revolution that faded with the light of that beautiful day.

Central to black militancy is the growing acceptance of individual criminal assault as a revolutionary ideal. In a sociological, if not in a moral sense, the militants are correct in making a connection between the two. Crime is, in fact, not only a personal act but an attack upon the standards and the values of society. In *Soul on Ice* El-

dridge Cleaver wrote of the motivation for his aggression against women. "Rape was an insurrectionary act. It delighted me that I was defying and trampling upon the white man's law, upon his system of values, and that I was defiling his women—and this point, I believe, was the most satisfying to me because I was very resentful of how the white man had used black women. I felt I was getting revenge . . . I know that if I had not been apprehended I would have slit some white throats."

The criminal, as Cleaver's confession reveals, has always had a positive appeal to Negroes. Certainly one of the factors that made Malcolm X a universal black hero was his adolescent career of crime. Essential to the black folklore is a term of imprisonment, not as in white mythology served in spite of innocence, but because of guilt. To the black imagination, both the commission of a criminal act and the jail term are badges of honor and manhood.

Black radical Julius Lester, in his provocatively titled book *Look Out, Whitey! Black Power's Gon' Get Your Mama!* states that the criminal life offers a Negro "a modicum of self-respect."

Joining the colloquy, Jewish sociologist Marvin Wolfgang in his study *Crime and Race* stated, "In one sense delinquency and crime are conceived as normal responses to conditions of life that close doors to opportunity. Delinquency becomes both a protest against the system . . . and a way, albeit illegitimate, to obtain the symbols of success (car, property, power)."

Coinciding with the sociological motivation of crime are psychological causes. Black criminality is a form of social nihilism and personal self-destructiveness. Richard Wright described this emotive complexity in the rape-murder scene of *Native Son*. A random criminal like Bigger Thomas commits his act against society and himself almost consciously in the hope that he will be caught and punished. This motivation leads to the selection of the most innocent victims and the commission of the most

atrocious crimes, and it explains in part the physical brutality that black "burglars" have visited on elderly Jewish shopkeepers in the ghetto during so-called holdups. It also explains the beatings and rapings of elderly white women by young blacks.

The Kerner Report made a point of exploring the relationship between crime and civil disorder. "Nothing," it said, "is more fundamental to the quality of life in any area than the sense of personal security of its residents and nothing affects this more than crime . . . crime rates are higher in disadvantaged Negro areas than anywhere else. It is also true that in the inner city areas which were white ethnic slums before they became black slums, the crime rate has always been high. Poverty breeds crime not only because poor people lack money and material goods but because poverty greatly contributes to social disorganization. The Negro, because of the still-felt effects of slavery, suffers from greater social disorganization than other groups in America. The self-destructiveness of the nihilist crimes—homicide, forcible rape and aggravated assault—can be seen by the fact that by far the largest number of victims have been the residents of low-income Negro neighborhoods. For non-whites the probability of being raped is 3.7 times higher than for whites, and of being robbed 3.5 times higher. The problems associated with high crime rates generate widespread hostility toward the police in these neighborhoods. Thus, crime not only breeds an atmosphere of insecurity and fear throughout Negro neighborhoods but it also contributes to the attrition of the relationship between Negro residents and the police. This bears a direct relationship to civil disorder.

Most statistics point to a continuing increase in the crime rate in the nation and in the ghettos. This will be true not only because crime increases with population density, but also because the number of police available to combat crime is rising slower than the amount of crime. In the next decade the number of young Negroes aged

fourteen to twenty-four will increase rapidly, particularly in central cities; and it is this group that is responsible for a disproportionately high share of those arrested for murder (37 percent), rape (60 percent), robbery (71 percent), larceny (81 percent) and auto theft (80 percent). The number of Negroes arrested for crimes is four times the white rate.

Mozell Hill, writing in the *Journal of Negro Education,* explained the rising tide of black juvenile delinquency when he said, "It is likely to occur most frequently when and where aspirations of youth persist under conditions of limited and prescribed opportunities. Under such circumstances, access to success-goals by legitimate means is seldom available to Negro youth in cities. They do not have opportunities for internalization of acceptable and respectable norms of conduct."

Ironically, the increasing attention focused on the black problem has put an end to their hopes. Since these hopes cannot yet be translated into reality, the ensuing frustration escalates the crime rate.

Crime is one aspect of poverty, and the poor of each ethnic group have produced their own archetypal criminal. The white Protestant prototypes were Billy the Kid, Jesse James, Belle Starr, John Dillinger, and Bonnie and Clyde. Whatever they may have been in reality, they became folk myths. In countless movies and magazine tales, they, or their fictional derivatives, have been cast as gallant losers—even as rebels with a cause.

Jesse James, Belle Starr and Billy the Kid were all seen as representatives of older virtues, of simpler times. They were the frontier stock—the cowboys, the individualists destroyed by the advance of a complicated civilization. Rather than "go gentle into that good night," they fought back in hopeless nihilistic holding actions, or at least so the legends go.

The theme was repeated in the twice-told tales of John Dillinger and Bonnie and Clyde. These criminals, too,

were depicted not as vicious psychopaths but as victims of a large impersonal society—products of the Depression who robbed the symbols of their oppression—the banks. The consumers of this folklore also hated the banks, whose failure had declassed a whole generation of hard-working, God-fearing white Protestant Americans. The Irish, the Italians and the Jews have also had their style of criminality. But Negroes have never really attained the admired status of villain in the mythology of cinematic crime. The white popular imagination has until very recently simply ignored them. Although a growing number of slum-bound black youths see in the rapist, the robber and the assaulter a redeemer of their manhood, whites still view Negro criminals as desperate and dangerous individuals.

Persistent stereotypes usually have some basis in fact. The Italian criminal style is that of syndicate boss. The Jewish criminal role has been that of fixer and racket "mouthpiece," while the Negro, even in the criminal world, has been relegated to the role of hired hand. He has been a numbers seller, rarely a numbers banker. He is the hired thug, small-scale pusher and user of dope.

Despite the lowly place of the black in the criminal hierarchy, racket activity is an important feature of ghetto life. This fact, according to the Kerner Report, has had much to do with the generally low estate in which the law and the keeper of that law—the policeman—have fallen in the eyes of ghetto residents.

The most pronounced illegal businesses in the ghettos are the numbers, or illegal gambling, syndicates; the drug racket; and prostitution. With the exception of prostitution, the ownership of the rackets lies outside the ghetto—usually with the Mafia families.

Negroes, however, are the chief agents of these syndicates, and they are viewed in the black community as heroes in much the same way as the Italian and Jewish gangsters were viewed in the ethnic enclaves of the 1920's.

For the rackets could not exist without at least the tacit consent of the white power structure.

Arrangements regarding dope, numbers and even prostitution are made with the police, who receive regular payoffs for not disturbing these operations, many of which are conducted in the strip bars that are owned if not run by Jewish bar-financing syndicates. At present these criminal coalitions tend also to be ethnic coalitions. Generally, the Italian racket bosses are at the top, the Jewish fixers are in the middle, and at the bottom are the Negro enforcers and clients. The middlemen are frequently Jewish because the strips were once the business streets of the old Jewish enclaves, and the remaining white politicians are usually Jewish.

Complaints about flagrant prostitution, the open operation of the numbers racket, and of dope and liquor peddling to minors in the strip bars by respectable Negro residents are usually ignored by the authorities because the authorities are in league with the lawbreakers. For example, on September 27, 1968, Mrs. Novella Williams led two hundred people in a demonstration on the 52nd Street strip in black West Philadelphia, which runs northward between Baltimore Avenue and Market Street. The purpose of the action was "to protest crime and corruption in the area."

The demonstration was aimed specifically at the 4-6 Club at 276 South 52nd Street, which Mrs. Williams said was open twenty-four hours a day and which she called the strip's worst offender. "We are," she charged, "allowing our top officials to support the ugly evil of white drug pushers. We have a terrible situation because we have prostitution and drugs running rampant, gambling and no police protection. All the foot patrolmen were removed from the area last summer." One bar, she continued, "is the hub of it all. It is where the deals are made. It is a haven for the peddling of drugs and prostitution."

The *Philadelphia Tribune,* the city's largest Negro

newspaper, stated that the club received special protection even though it had been frequently cited by the State Liquor Control Board for violating the law; it was allowed to operate, the paper noted, despite the fact that its license had been lifted because its owners included three prominent politicians: two Jews and a Negro. The Jews accused were magistrates; the Negro accused was a Negro Union Official and former State Representative.

In Philadelphia, Negro civic groups have long been concerned about the concentration of bars in ghetto areas. In arrant disregard of a state quota that proscribes more than one saloon per 1,500 residents, ghetto neighborhoods have one bar to every 300 people. The granting of zoning variances which allow this in Philadelphia and other cities is controlled by politicians. Taprooms are one of the largest sources of local political contributions and bar owners can be counted on as regular donors in winning years and losing years, in local and state elections, as well as national campaigns. Their contributions buy consideration from the law-enforcement agencies.

The open alliance between the police, the political structure and the racketeers, which has been documented in Newark by a federal grand jury, has done much to erode the already tenuous belief that young Negroes have in the honesty of the system. Calls to them for law and order fall on deaf ears.

The connection between youthful black contempt for the platitudes of society and the riots and rioters was revealed when studies were made of the participants of the mobs that coursed through the streets of Watts, Cincinnati, Dayton, Grand Rapids, Newark, New Haven, Boston, Plainfield and Phoenix. The studies demonstrated that there was a close correlation between riotous youths' broken homes, meager incomes and dismal school records. Unexpectedly, however, they disproved three other widely held theories: that most rioters had police records, that

rioters were members of organized gangs and that troublemakers were newly arrived from the South.

About 18 percent of the residents of riot areas participated in the disorders and about 95 percent of the rioters lived in the city where the trouble occurred. Indeed, most of the troublemakers came from within the immediate vicinity. These participants were not "riff-raff" but fairly representative of the Negro community.

The overwhelming majority (75 percent) were employed but at menial, unskilled work. Two-thirds were adults. Although 90 percent of those arrested were males, eyewitnesses report a high proportion of women in the streets. Interestingly, although the rioter's economic position was about the equal of his quiescent neighbor, he was usually better educated, having at least attended high school even if he did not graduate. He frequently felt that he was underemployed and deserved a better job but that he was barred from one by prejudice. The rioter expressed great pride in his race and open and extreme hostility to whites. His anger, however, seemed as much a product of social and economic class hatred as of race antagonism. He was frequently angrier at middle-class Negroes than he was at whites. Better informed politically than his passive neighbors, the rioter was usually engaged in civil rights efforts but was extremely distrustful of the political system.

In the opinion of the authors of the study on rioters attached to the Kerner Report, "Riots are justified by most Negroes but not recommended by them." Most Negroes see the riots as spontaneous reactions to economic conditions; only a very few define them as criminal acts to be suppressed by the police (in contradistinction to the public sentiments expressed by leading middle-class Negroes). The typical counter-rioter not only does not share the rioter's animus against the white system and the Negro middle class but is frequently a member of that class

himself. The counter-rioter is considerably better educated and more affluent than either the rioter or the passive resident.

The surveys also reveal a much higher percentage of approval of militant black separationist leaders than the ideas they advocate. While 35 percent of the ghetto residents voice their approval of Stokely Carmichael and H. Rap Brown and say that they do not believe that there has been any real improvement in Negro conditions since 1954, only one in eight Negroes believes in residential segregation. While 42 percent say they would like their children to learn an African language, only 6 percent want to live in a separate nation and only 20 percent believe that stores in Negro neighborhoods should be owned and run by Negroes.

According to a Harris poll taken in 1966, middle- and upper-middle-income Negroes showed a higher willingness to join a riot than lower-class Negroes. Historically, it has

cities are not individually physically isolated and vulnerable to attack. In a sense, the ghetto is doing for the Negro what it did for the Jew—forcing the creation of a cohesive community.

Although Negroes, like European Jews, have a fear of their neighbors—the average black ghetto youth is no more comfortable with whitey than the average European ghetto Jew was with the proverbial goy—Negroes for the first time have a feeling of safety in numbers. They might know that there are ten times as many whites in the nation, but they realize, too, that in their own territory they have the overwhelming majority. This knowledge makes the ghetto Negro unafraid either to defend himself or to strike out aggressively against the white man when he ventures onto his turf.

Negroes, unlike Jews, have until recently been divided among themselves. During slavery the antagonisms between classes of Negroes were created. The house Negro was set against the field Negro, the mulatto against the pure-blooded. Until very recently these divisions were maintained and encouraged by white society and served to keep the Negro emasculated. Only in the ghetto has the bond of race been allowed to develop into a useful and positive force.

Unlike the Jews of Europe, however, who ranked above their peasant neighbors in education, culture and occupation, Negroes are an island of poor in a sea of affluence. They differ, too, from the European ghetto Jews, who had the power at least to organize their own communities. Contrarily Negroes' lives are governed in almost all details by the outside white world. This difference in position and power has created vastly different world-views. Even in the worst days of European oppression, Jews did not, like Negroes, seek an apocalypse of violence. They had no vision of pulling down the temple of society over their own heads to destroy their enemies—a view widely espoused by black militants on the streets and campuses.

Jews, instead, had a survival-oriented philosophy directed at accommodation, and thus they traded on reason, not emotion, and attempted to make the best rather than the worst of all possible worlds.

It is black powerlessness almost as much as penury that has incited disorder—a powerlessness all too often symbolized by the Jewish merchant, landlord, bar owner, teacher, social worker, doctor and politician. Solutions based primarily on improving schools, housing and employment without granting Negroes their fair share of power will not end the disorders. As long as Negroes are politically frustrated by the system of flamboyant and Uncle Tom leadership, their grievances will find violent outlets.

There are signs, however, that Negroes will be allowed into the seats of the mighty. The re-election of Carl Stokes in Cleveland, Richard Hatcher in Gary, Kenneth Gibson in Newark and Julian Bond in Atlanta is a portent of good things to come if American society can resist the evil force of backlash.

16

THE POLITICS OF RACE

On May 2, 1967, two columns of black men cradling M-1 rifles and 12-gauge shotguns in their arms marched up the white marble steps of the state capitol building in Sacramento, California. Dressed in boots, leather jackets and berets, they carried .45-caliber pistols on their hips and cartridge belts around their waists. Boldly they walked into the legislative chamber of the state's lower house, where a bill restricting the carrying of loaded weapons was being debated. The bill, introduced at the instigation of the Oakland City Police, was directed primarily at the intruding group, members of the Black Panther party.

The armed visitors had purportedly come to Sacramento to lobby against the passage of the bill, called the Mulford Act. Their plan had been to make an appearance in the spectators' gallery and to issue a statement. Ignorant of the capitol's floor plan, the blacks had unknowingly

followed a group of newsmen and cameramen into the legislative chamber.

The reporters had swarmed in front of the Panthers as soon as they arrived on the capitol steps and, assuming that the militants were headed for the legislative hall, they had unwittingly led them into the room.

The Speaker, seeing the commotion near the heavy oak doors at the rear of the chamber, called to the guards to "clear out those cameramen." Before most of the assemblymen knew what was going on, the newsmen and the Panthers had vacated the room and were milling around in the hall.

Despite the willingness of the Panthers to leave the chamber, the news media termed their accidental intrusion "an armed invasion" and gave them the nationwide publicity they were seeking.

In the corridor, guards attempted to relieve the group of their weapons and were chagrined to learn that they had no right to disarm the fierce young blacks. Angered and embarrassed, the state police temporarily retreated and allowed Huey P. Newton, the Panther's Minister of Defense, to read a prepared statement. On completion of the impromptu press conference, the Panthers departed.

Contrary to media-created opinion, the Panther expedition to Sacramento had not been designed to provoke or to frighten white authorities, although Newton had realized it might do both, nor was the only purpose of the trip to lobby against passage of the Mulford Act, which as Newton suspected was passed; rather, the Panther objective was to create a political impact in the black community.

"Ninety percent of the reason we carry guns is educational," said the twenty-seven-year-old leader, who is currently in a California prison serving a five- to fifteen-year term for manslaughter in connection with the shooting of a California policeman.

"We set the example. We make black people aware

that they have the right to carry guns." Explaining his trip to Sacramento, he said, "We wanted them [the legislators] to know we will continue to arm black people in spite of any legislation that is passed. We weren't trying to influence what they did. Our message was to point out that the plot to disarm black America would fail."

Although Newton did not then admit it, the Sacramento caravan was also a recruiting device, designed to catch the attention of the "young blacks."

Newton, along with Panther co-founder Bobby Seale, who has since been prosecuted by the federal government on a variety of counts which include inciting to riot and murder, is a black intellectual who knows that if he is ever to create a mass movement, the foot soldiers must come from the black underclass. To attract them, the Black Panther party has to appeal not only to their anger but to their pride. It must also answer their need for masculine identity. Newton and Seale deliberately adopted the trappings of the military and employed the rhetoric of violence because they knew that both connote virility to the Negro male.

Discussing how the party came to be founded, Newton, the youngest of seven children born to a New Orleans Baptist minister who became a city employee in Oakland, California, recalled his experiences at Meritt College, a two-year institution on the fringe of the Oakland ghetto, which has become a hotbed of black nationalism. "It was an exciting time—a time of great self-discovery. I used to cut classes and sit around the coffee shops arguing about black nationalism."

One of those with whom Newton argued was Bobby Seale. Endlessly they debated the merits of W. E. B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey and Frantz Fanon. Together they joined the Afro-American Association, a campus group that advocated Negro separatism and self-improvement. It was led by a lawyer named Donald Warden. Cultural nationalism, however, was too tame for the friends who

came to regard Warden as "a hard core capitalist." For a while Newton, attracted by Malcolm X, even contemplated becoming a Black Muslim, but he "could not accept the religious aspect."

As a young man Huey Newton, like his hero Malcolm X, spent a year in jail. It was there that he became a revolutionary. Seale, in the same period, without the prison experience, underwent a similar metamorphosis.

Upon Newton's release in 1966, he and Seale joined forces and created a black revolutionary political party. Together with two other recruits, Bobby Hutton and David Hilliard, they rode the Oakland streets bird-dogging the city police. In between these expeditions they stood on Oakland ghetto street corners openly exhorting their audiences to defy the local forces of law and order by "executing cops."

At the time of the Sacramento demonstration it is estimated that the Panthers (who took the name and the symbol, but not the philosophy, of the Lowndes County, Alabama, black political party created by SNCC in 1965) numbered no more than seventy-five men and women. The national publicity garnered by their Sacramento outing made it possible for the party to expand rapidly.

Broadening their Oakland base to include San Francisco, they opened headquarters on Fillmore Street. In the Golden Gate City they made a point of attending church services throughout the ghetto. Aggressively they sold their newspaper, repeated their ideology, and wore their uniforms.

Articulating the Panther program in June 1967, Huey Newton said, "First, we want the power to determine the destiny of our black communities.

"No. 2: We want full employment for our people.

"No. 3: We want housing fit for the shelter of human beings.

"No. 4: We want all black men to be exempt from military service.

"No. 5: We want decent education for poor black people in our communities that teaches us the true nature of this decadent, racist society and that teaches black people and our young black brothers and sisters their place in the society, for if they don't know their place in society and in the world, they can't relate to anything else.

"No. 6: We want an end to the robbery by the white racist businessmen of black people in their community.

"No. 7: We want an immediate end to police brutality and murder of black people.

"No. 8: We want all black men held in city, county, state and federal jails to be released because they have not had a fair trial because they've been tried by all white juries, and that's just like being tried in Nazi Germany, being a Jew.

"No. 9: We want black people when brought to trial to be tried by members of their peer group."

Newton described a peer as being one "who comes from the same economic, social, religious, historical and racial background . . . people from the black community . . . mothers who have worked . . . in Miss Anne's kitchen scrubbing floors . . . hard working fathers [and] . . . some of those brothers who stand on the block."

Newton concluded by saying, "We want land, we want bread, we want housing, we want clothing, we want education, we want justice and we want peace."

How did the Panthers intend to achieve these goals? In a *New York Times* interview on May 21, 1967, Newton stated: "Political power comes through the barrel of a gun . . . Force, guns and arms are the political arena. Decisions against black people are always backed up by racist police forces and racist military force. We do not believe in passive and non-violent techniques. They haven't worked for us black people. They are bankrupt . . . We are here to defend ourselves and our black communities."

Newton then explained his adoption of the Black Pan-

ther symbol. "The Black Panther will not attack anyone, but will back up, but when he's cornered will strike out and will not stop until the aggressor is wiped out thoroughly, wholly, absolutely and completely."

And if the Panthers cannot obtain their ends even with violent means? Seale answered this question standing on an up-turned garbage-can at a Panther organizing rally in June 1967, at a housing project in San Francisco. "We have potential destructive power. Look around at those factories down there. If we don't get what we want, we can make it impossible for the man's system to function. All we got to do is drop some cocktails into those oil tanks and then watch everything go."

Since that sunny afternoon, the Panthers have acted. In addition to revolutionary rhetoric they have set up free hot breakfast programs for schoolchildren and free medical clinics in more than thirty cities across the country, including New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. In the process they have come into contact with other ghetto-based militants throughout the nation.

Replacing SNCC as the most radical Negro militant group, the Panthers even managed to win the adherence of Stokely Carmichael. The transition was in part effected by the Panthers' terroristic tactics, a glaring example of which occurred in late July 1968, when a group of them walked into SNCC offices on Fifth Avenue in Harlem and terrorized Chairman James Foreman. One of the invaders put a pistol into Foreman's mouth and squeezed the trigger three times. The gun, it turned out, was unloaded. However, the trauma put Foreman in the hospital and ended the tentative five-month alliance between the two groups. Horrified by this behavior, Rap Brown resigned as Panther Minister of Justice, and Foreman quit as Panther Minister of Foreign Affairs. Carmichael was expelled from SNCC because he defended the Panthers.

Carmichael's expulsion was in fact an acknowledgment of an estrangement that went back to Watts and 1965. In

Carmichael's view, SNCC had never learned how to effectively organize and deal with urban Negro problems. He came to believe that the Panthers, who were wise in the ways of the slums, politically sophisticated and organized around the gun, had the nerve and the ability to carry on the struggle in the cities.

For Carmichael and many others, Watts was the turning point. It marked the end of the middle-class-oriented civil rights movement and the beginning of black liberation in the slums. The Panthers are a slum-based operation, while SNCC still has a college-bred base.

Ever since the Panthers emerged into the national limelight in 1967, the competition between the two organizations has been bitter. Eldridge Cleaver snidely refers to SNCC members as "black hippies," and SNCC-ites view Panthers as "bandits."

The Panthers, however, much to the dismay of SNCC and the more moderate Negro groups, have become a major force in the black movement because they have developed a program that can be clearly understood by the least educated slum-dweller and that in many ways expresses the black underclasses' unarticulated desires.

Not content with this achievement, the Panthers have attempted to create a broader revolutionary base not restricted to the ghetto. In 1968 they joined white radicals in organizing the loosely knit nationwide Peace and Freedom party. Its candidate for President was Panther Minister of Information Eldridge Cleaver, the thirty-four-year-old best-selling author of *Soul on Ice,* a self-confessed and convicted rapist, who is now an exile in Africa for violating his parole. Although Cleaver garnered little more than 34,000 of the nearly 74,000,000 votes cast in the presidential election, this failure did not diminish his luster as a Panther. Not only was the erstwhile candidate a literary celebrity who helped gain the party entry into the salons of elegant, rich and famous white radicals, but as a slum-bred black, he was a charismatic figure to poor Negroes.

In addition to talking revolution, setting up free breakfast and health programs, and entering the political lists the Panthers have also found themselves involved in a series of shoot-outs with police in New York, Newark, Washington, D.C., Chicago and Los Angeles.

These gun matches were to a great extent the result of the Panthers' penchant for attracting publicity. Their fierce words and boasts of violence, widely amplified by the mass media, quickly brought them to the attention of police forces across the country. Pressured by citizen indignation over the crime rate, emboldened by their own rising sense of power, and reassured by working-class patriotism, the police saw in the Panthers the apotheosis of evil and declared open warfare on them.

In Brooklyn, Panthers who were charged with holding a rally without a permit were beaten up by two hundred off-duty white policemen in a courthouse corridor. In Chicago, policemen broke into Illinois party headquarters with all guns blazing, leaving in their wake the corpses of Panther leaders Fred Hampton and Mark Clark. In Los Angeles a similar if less deadly bust was staged.

In Connecticut, Bobby Seale and thirteen others were indicted on charges of torturing and murdering a fellow Panther, while in New York State twelve male Panthers and two females who had spent nine months in a variety of prisons awaiting trial on charges of conspiring to bomb public places brought suit in federal court alleging custodial persecution. Among the charges made was that they had been beaten. Meanwhile, the federal government began to take the party in deadly earnest.

In response the Panthers began to deny the legitimate authority of the courts they were being tried in. The most dramatic example of this defiance was Bobby Seale's conduct at the trial in Chicago of the purported leaders of the demonstrations at the 1968 Democratic National Convention. Originally indicted with Seale were seven whites: Abbie Hoffman, Rennie Davis, David Dellinger,

John Froines, Tom Hayden, Jerry Rubin and Lee Weiner. Jumping out of his seat shouting revolutionary slogans mixed with obscenities, Seale created such a disturbance that Judge Julius Hoffman ordered him gagged and manacled to his chair.

Seale's picture chained and gagged was reproduced on front pages around the world. Its impact resulted in the court's declaring his mistrial.

In New York City other Panthers adopted Seale's disruptive courtroom tactics. Their actions delayed trial and cast doubt upon the ability of the courts to deal with the Panthers within the framework of the American judicial system.

Despite their bold words and courtroom bravado the Panthers have suffered grave losses. Of the original leadership, Hutton is dead, Cleaver is in exile, and Newton and Seale are in jail. There, according to Seale, they are "dreaming about 1984." Active membership, which once was as high as 2,000, has been halved. Of these activists, 100 are in jail and another 400 to 500 have cases pending against them.

Despite this decimation, the Panthers remain a powerful symbol to young ghetto blacks. Their violence and their tragic fates have created a revolutionary legend.

At first sight, Oakland does not seem a city to have incubated a national black power movement. It is a rundown industrial port town on the east side of San Francisco Bay; much of the housing there dates back to the end of the nineteenth century. It officially refers to itself as an "All American City," an accolade awarded it in 1955 by *Look* magazine and the National Municipal League. Until World War II few of its inhabitants were Negro, but by 1966 blacks were one-fourth of the population. The Oakland whites, like whites in metropolises all across the country, moved to the suburbs—in this case, the surrounding hills. The city government is, to a large extent, dominated by the city's businessmen, who live in the

hills, and has strongly resisted the granting of any real share of power to its black populace. The story of Oakland is the story of many cities all across the land. If black power can happen in Oakland, it can happen everywhere. And it is happening.

In Philadelphia, in the summer of 1967, a group called the Revolutionary Action Movement preached a brand of politics that was a cross between Karl Marx, Mao Tse-tung and Adolf Hitler. In a revolutionary handbook they declared: "In order for the world black revolution to be successful, all non-white people must unite and destroy the existing white powers.

"The dictatorship of the black underclass is the central difference between black internationalists and reformers.

"We pledge ourselves in a blood bond to purge the planet, uniting our people into one single unconquerable force. Liberation or Death."

The RAMs were founded by Robert Williams, a former NAACP chairman from Monroe, North Carolina, who began preaching the doctrine of Negro self-defense in the early 1960's and fled first to Cuba and then to China to escape federal prosecution. Tiring of exile, he recently returned to the United States.

The RAMs are attempting to pave the way for a world-wide color revolution by organizing the youth of the ghetto into an elite shock troop called the Black Guard.

In Camden, New Jersey there are, in addition to the Panthers, groups known as the Bantu Guard, the Mau Maus, the Black Unity Movement and the Veterans for Freedom, as well as assorted Freedom schools.

While in Los Angeles Ron Karenga née Ronald McKinley Everett, the son of a Parsonburg, Maryland, chicken farmer, has founded a Black Nationalist movement called US. Karenga, a small man with a shaven head and a Fu-Manchu mustache and goatee, wears a green cape and oversized glasses and preaches the importance of "ethnic identity." A former Los Angeles City College stu-

dent and schoolteacher, he is fond of reciting to his enthusiastic followers the African parable of the lion and the elephant. "There they tell the tale of the lion who attacked the elephant head-on only to be knocked back by the elephant's trunk. Grown wise with experience, the lion turned to stealth. He attacked from the rear and from the sides. He made a gash here and a wound there until he bled the elephant to death. Unless America awakens to the fact that she must contend with the blacks as an enemy or bargain with us as citizens, it will be to her serious disadvantage."

In Harlem there are many groups of black nationalists, Pro-Africans, Afro-Americans and anti-whites. Among them are those who advocate a return to Africa, those who want a separate nation within the United States, and those who demand that Harlem become an independent city. Some conceive of the ghetto as an occupied land of schools, stores and the police, seeing in these demands a way to develop a black economic power base as well as a way to create a more dignified and safer life for those who, by the experiences of race and income, are condemned to live there.

Active in Harlem besides the Panthers, SNCC and an increasingly militant CORE are a covey of other organizations, less interested in revolution than in black identity, which nonetheless provide a rich seedbed for the advocates of the politics of race and racial revolution. Among them are: the Yoruba Temple, whose members wear African dress, follow the Voodoo religion, study the Yoruba language and, while waiting for a return to Africa, support the Viet Cong; the old-line African Nationalist Movement of Carlos Cook; the Black Arts Theatre founded by LeRoi Jones; the African Freedom Movement; the United African Nationalist Movement; the Harlem Council for Economic Development; the African Jazz-Art Society and Studio; the African Nationalists of America; Awareness; and the Organization of Afro-Ameri-

can Unity, run by Mrs. Ella Collins, sister of the late Malcolm X.

In some extreme forms black power militancy can become simple hooliganism. Late in October 1968, in Philadelphia, a gang of militants associated with the Bantu School of Culture, which purports to teach African history and culture, invaded the headquarters of another militant Negro group called PRIDE, which has been supported with funds from integrated groups to conduct a clean-streets and rat-eradication program. The Bantus lined PRIDE members up against a wall, removed their wallets, tied them, put pillow cases over their heads and beat them up.

Early in November 1968, passengers aboard an airplane bound for Miami were suddenly confronted by a Negro clad all in black, brandishing a gun, who, although alone, announced that " 'black nationalists' are going to hijack a plane for the next hundred days to show white people they can't keep us down." Redirecting the pilot toward Havana, he renamed the jetliner the "Republic of New Africa" and called for donations at the point of his gun.

In the middle of January 1969, a meeting was held in a lunchroom in Campbell Hall on the UCLA campus at Westwood, California, to discuss the selection of a head for the Afro-American studies center. Present were 150 black students. The students were divided between supporters of the Black Panthers and followers of Ron Karanga's US. Also at issue was the presidency of the Black Students Union, the most influential body among the 500 Negro students on the campus. The meeting ended in a shooting match which left two Panthers dead.

The idea of Negroes organizing along racial lines is not new. In 1904, the National Liberal party was created by Edwin Taylor, its only candidate for President. Taylor, who did about as well as Eldridge Cleaver electorally and with a great deal less fanfare, analyzed the situation at the turn of the century. "We are confronted with the amazing

fact that more than one-fifth of the race are actually disenfranchised, robbed of all rights, powers and benefits of true citizenship. We are forced to lay aside indeed our personal wishes, and consult with the higher demands of our manhood."

Taylor's diagnosis is still being made today by black power advocates such as Julius Lester, who in his book, *Look Out, Whitey! Black Power's Gon' Get Your Mama!* implored, "Why dignify those who get wealthy by keeping others poor, why call them business leaders, labor leaders, religious leaders, civil rights leaders, or government officials. Their existence depends on their ability to keep my face in the mud."

Lester is not alone in believing that twentieth-century American wealth is dependent upon the nineteenth-century ante-bellum plantation. But the truth is that the ghetto blacks in no substantive way contribute to the United States economy. Insofar as ghetto residents are unskilled, ill-educated, unemployed, underemployed and impoverished, they are a drain upon the whole economy. In reaction to the massive indifference of the white community, the ghetto has created the doctrine of the white devil upon which Malcolm X waxed with such eloquence and ferocity. The white devil remains at the heart of black power demonology and of black power politics. In its odd but understandable way, this doctrine is but a thinly veiled version of white supremacy in which black people feel they are facing not only a more numerous and more powerful enemy but one that has every advantage.

About the only real political force black power advocates believe they possess is the ability to create fear. It is this singular asset that the militants are attempting to shape into a tool with a cutting edge. And they have not been without effect on the Negro community as a whole, on the white power structure, on the political scene and on the Jews who have so often been both their allies and adversaries.

The pull of black ethnocentricity can be seen on such old-line organizations as the Urban League, which is for the first time actively engaged in working with the poorest blacks in the ghetto in such diverse fields as birth control, law enforcement, educational tutoring and the development of political power.

Organizations like CORE have been pushed into completely new orbits by the force of blackness. In the case of this once militantly integrationist civil rights group, a deep ideological conflict surfaced as early as 1966 at the national convention in Columbus, Ohio, when Robert Carson of the Brooklyn chapter walked out after a resolution was defeated to transform the organization from a reform group to a revolutionary one. Carson was joined by chapter heads from the Bronx, Queens, Philadelphia and Kansas. They were joined in turn by Lincoln Lynch, a former CORE National Director.

The parent group was not unaffected by the ferment. Its long-time moderate Executive Director James Farmer resigned and was replaced by Floyd McKissick, a Southern lawyer who embraced the concept of black power as an economic and political weapon. McKissick was in turn followed by Roy Innis, an all-out black nationalist who favors separatism and whose ultimate goal would seemingly be an apartheid state.

Innis, like Stokely Carmichael and Lincoln Lynch, is from the Caribbean, and he attributes his radicalism to that fact. "It has something to do with the adjustment you make when you come here. I was shocked to find the word black was almost a cuss word with American Negroes. It is true that there is a lot of poverty in the Islands but we felt proud of being black and did not feel alienated in society."

This new-found pride and assertiveness has even influenced such black bourgeois institutions as the *Philadelphia Tribune,* which has launched a drive to replace white political leadership with blacks in areas where Negroes

have numerical superiority. Although the paper's publishers would never like to be caught in a political embrace with Stokely Carmichael, it is Stokely's dictum that they have unwittingly accepted. "Black men," declared Carmichael in his book *Black Power,* "are rarely allowed to represent white men so why should white men represent black men." (According to the militant dogma, Senator Edward W. Brooke of Massachusetts is the exception who proves the rule. They view his election as a convenient way for whites to salve their conscience without making any real commitment to black power.)

Strengthening the pull toward black power in the ghettos is the Negro community's tradition of envy of the Negro middle and upper classes and its resentment of the individual Negro who breaks out of the ghetto. These emotions may well find their counterpart in slavery, where the division of slaves into house and field categories created a still-unbridged class gap.

This antagonism is openly voiced in the reviling anti-Tom rhetoric and powerful pressures in the lower-income Negro communities against those who get ahead in the world. The mother of one black child in an integrated public school told of the anger that her neighbors expressed when she enrolled her child in the middle-class school.

This resentment is augmented in the ghettos by the terror tactics of many of the street-corner militants who bully their neighbors into allowing them to act as their spokesmen. Although many residents, women in particular, are bitterly resentful of these bully boys, they have too little faith in the white establishment or the white man's police to protect them should they protest this imposed leadership.

As great as the influence of black power has been on the Negro community, it has made an even larger impression on college activists both black and white. The black militants' style, vocabulary, rhetoric and slogans have been

adopted wholesale by student groups. Next to the Vietnam War, the cause of the blacks has had the most profound and radicalizing influence on the campuses. Confrontation politics comes directly out of the civil rights movement and its voice has unquestionably been made more strident by the example of the riots.

The students' concern for the problems of the ghettos that border on most urban campuses is beginning to have an effect on these institutions' view of themselves vis-à-vis the inhabitants of the areas in which they are located. In attacking the concept of continuous physical expansion of college plants, the students are not only defending the property rights of the Negroes who are the obvious victims of this urge to giantism, but they are also defending themselves. By resisting bigness, or decrying it, the student asserts himself in human terms. At New York City's Columbia University the proposed construction of a gymnasium on the site of a park used by the black community set off a far-reaching student demonstration. Students not only occupied the president's office but their actions ended in his resignation as well as the cancellation of the gymnasium.

Student agitation, both black and white, has initiated a soul-searching in academe about the purposes of education and the true functions of the multiversities. In a most positive way it has forced educators to re-examine some of their basic premises and to compare their stated goals with their practices. It has forced a re-evaluation among certain leaders on some campuses of the relationship between defense grants and academic research and the easy interchange between professorial roles and governmental positions, and the policy of employing academic talent to further governmental ends. It remains to be seen whether these initial stirrings will have permanent effect.

Student agitation, too, has resulted in an academic re-evaluation of the view it presents of American society. On campuses like the University of Iowa, Brandeis and the

University of Pennsylvania, faculty administrators are being pressured to offer courses in Afro-American history, culture, literature and politics. The vast majority of these new courses will be taught by black men. In addition, the larger universities in the cities are beginning to set up centers for the study of the Negro, his place in world history and in America. Again the prestigious posts are going to Negroes.

It is possible that the result of student ferment, coupled with the ever-present threat of ghetto eruption, will be a great opening-up and revitalizing of the forms and institutions of higher education. For even at its worst, academe is by far the most liberal and tolerant of all of the nation's institutions. By and large the faculty has supported student ends, if not their means, and the ranks of the administrators have by no means been completely closed to innovation. The question is how long the forces outside the universities—the trustees, the governmental units and the large corporations who have the ultimate power—will allow the disruptions to continue before they loose upon the colleges and universities the forces of repression.

On lower educational levels the black militant's insistence on black pride and black unity is also bearing fruit even if it is only of a short-lived variety. In public, private and even in some parochial schools, there is a strong movement to rewrite the history books to include the black population and to present a less romanticized, more realistic view of our nation's history.

Those students who, along with civil rights leaders, have wrought so much constitute only a minority of those who matriculate at college. A 1968 poll in *Fortune* magazine shows that about 42 percent of students on campus identify with the New Left, or about 750,000 of the 1.9 million total.

The largest single group of students who have made the cause of the blacks their own are Jewish. It is esti-

mated that they comprise one out of every three campus activists. The Jewish establishment which, like other establishment groups is essentially hostile to the New Left, has attempted to minimize the role of its children. Fearful that obvious Jewish participation in what could be termed "un-American activities" could activate an anti-Semitic backlash, they have claimed that only 5 percent of the Jews on college campuses are New Left participants. The *Fortune* study, however, makes it clear that a far larger number of Jewish students sympathize with New Left goals and causes, even if they are not part of its demonstrations.

Interestingly enough, in the areas of black concern these white students, and in particular the Jewish students, have been willing to allow the blacks not only to take over the leadership but to treat them in frequently humiliating ways. For example, one white Jewish delegate to the New Politics Convention held in Chicago in the summer of 1967 claimed, "We were being asked to flagellate our liberal consciences." He was referring to demands made by the black caucus not only for 50 percent of the leadership roles, when only 10 percent of the delegates were black, but for passage of a resolution condemning "Israeli Imperialism."

Commented one Jewish girl from New York who passed her initiation with flying colors, "I'm not going to quibble over words while Negroes are dying in the streets of Newark and Detroit." This speaker was a prime example of the masochistic effect that the bondage of guilt imposes on those Jews most alienated from the established Jewish community. Overriding feelings of shame are also experienced in the Protestant clergy and by a growing number of Catholic priests and nuns.

The intimidation of radical, secular and religious whites is not, however, the major success of the black power movement. The movement has served to keep Negroes visible once the civil rights movement lost its momentum. It has also served to emphasize the Negro's economic and physi-

cal needs as opposed to their legal desires. It has demonstrated that Negro deprivation is so great that more than anti-discrimination laws will be needed if Negroes are ever to be able to take advantage of legal equal opportunities. It has continued to assert the existence of a black presence by its calls for community control and by its demands for Negro quotas in unions, industries and schools.

Without the ever-present threat posed by the militants, it is questionable if medical schools, in Philadelphia for example, would have made any accommodation with the demand made by the radical Medical Committee for Human Rights to set a 33 percent quota for blacks. The percentage was determined by the estimated percentage of the city's Negro population. Although the schools refused to establish a pro-black quota, having under pressure recently abandoned an anti-Jewish one, they did make immediate and successful attempts to increase the number of Negro students.

Riots, violence and the imminence of terror do affect the pocketbooks as well as the psyches of white Americans. They have brought about the creation of the urban coalition, the easing of credit to Negro entrepreneurs and the backing of several score Negro housing groups.

Despite these black power successes, the slogan is really a call for retreat. The separationist theme is not a new sound. The anger is an old refrain of despair. Despite its strident, vengeful tone it signifies defeat.

"Once again white society has rejected the Negro," said Roy Innis. Explaining the charge, he continued, "A big factor was that Negroes kept trying to get desegregated schools—a lot of busing and all that—and when it didn't happen and people saw it couldn't happen, they began to change their thinking.

"And then there was the Civil Rights Act of 1964. They had been working for it all these years and thought it would solve everything, but it didn't.

"Then there were all those civil rights killings in the

South and the fact that Southern juries wouldn't convict them, and there was the Vietnam War and the War on Poverty . . . Well, we are tired of unenforced laws . . . we would rather have respect than all that talk of brotherly love which alleviates the white man's guilt but doesn't result in positive gains for Negroes."

Bayard Rustin, Executive Director of the A. Philip Randolph Institute and the outstanding Negro opponent of black power, analyzed the slogan's retrogressive characteristics. "It diverts the movement from a meaningful debate over strategy and tactics, it isolates the Negro community, and it encourages the growth of anti-Negro forces." Rustin takes issue with the fright tactics of black power-ites. "The trouble with reasoning that only when the white man is frightened will he take note of the Negro, is that it will induce white hostility."

Rustin compares the black power slogan to Booker T. Washington's dictum of "Cast down your buckets where you are," to Du Bois' utopian proposals for a group economy, and to Marcus Garvey's dreams of Black Star capitalism.

Speaking of the rioting youths, he said, "They can see the alien world of affluence unfold before them on the TV screen. But they have already failed in their inferior segregated schools. Their grandfathers were sharecroppers, their grandmothers were domestics, and their mothers are domestics too. Many have never met their fathers. Mistreated by the local shopkeeper, suspected by the policeman on the beat, disliked by their teachers, they cannot stand more failures and would rather retreat . . .

"Thus, as in roughly similar circumstances in the past —circumstances, I repeat, which in the aggregate foster the belief that the ghetto is destined to last forever—Negroes are once again turning to nationalistic slogans with "black power" affording the same emotional release as "Back to Africa" and "Buy Black" did in earlier periods . . .

"It is, in short, the growing conviction that Negroes can-

not win . . . which accounts for the popularity of 'black power.' "

In a deeper sense, as the 1968 Kerner Report makes clear, it is white unwillingness and inability to abolish the social servitude of the Negro that has brought about both black defeat and retreat. The Reverend James Breeden, Assistant Director of the Commission on Religion and Race for the National Council of Churches, linked the most recent Negro setbacks to the earliest betrayals of the newly freed blackman. "One of the fundamental things that didn't happen in the Reconstruction [despite promises of forty acres and a mule] was land distribution. That would have its parallel today in the refusal to turn over significant economic resources to the dispossessed. The mood of the country is that there is not going to be any meaningful economic programs for Negroes."

One symptom of the reactionary and defeatist character of the black power movement, if proof is needed, is its anti-Semitism. Unable to effect the dominant white power structure that has fastened Negroes into their lower caste position, the militants have looked for and found a scapegoat in the Jews. In its desperation and displacement, black power politics has followed in the direction of other movements built on rage and despair. Even the Panthers, who have sought white radical allies, many of whom are Jewish, continue to castigate Israel. And Eldridge Cleaver appeared at an Arab unity conference in Algeria where there were calls for the destruction of Israel.

Lucy Dawidowicz, an American Jewish Committee researcher and frequent contributor to its journal, *Commentary,* mused bitterly on the subject. "Negroes were America's serfs, today a landless peasantry, forced to seek work in the cities. Like the Russian serfs in many respects, these poor Negro masses share with them a primitive religiosity embedded in superstition and a distrust of urban mercantile society and of a money economy. Their leaders (some are only agitators), activists, militants, nationalists

in the civil rights movement, are America's populists, articulating and escalating the latent and patent prejudices of their masses, hoping to stir them out of apathy into revolution," as did the Narodnaya Volya, the Russian agrarian populists of the 1880's.

Among the most active sources of anti-Semitism is the *Liberator* magazine, a journal published in Harlem. It has adopted the position that the Jew is the real oppressor of the Negro, and is so confident of the essential popularity of this charge that it has been willing to accept the resignations from its masthead of James Baldwin and Ossie Davis rather than modify its claims of Jewish avarice and hypocrisy.

"Such ideas," said Mrs. Dawidowicz, "make it hard to distinguish between black power, Black Shirts or Black Hundreds. Pavolaki Krushevan wrote similar things in his paper in Kishinev for five years, then in 1903 came the pogrom."

Comparing the Russian pogroms to the American riots, she continued, "In tsarist times, when word got around the villages that a pogrom was being organized in town, the peasants hitched the horses to the wagon to go for the loot. . . . Everybody but Jews appreciated pogroms: the authorities because it diverted peasant discontent, the agrarian populists because it stirred the masses, and the peasants because it was Christmas in August."

At a meeting of the Mount Vernon, New York, school board as early as 1966, CORE's Clifford Brown addressed the largely Jewish audience which was opposing school integration and said, "Hitler made one mistake. He didn't kill enough of you."

The remark caused a tremendous furor. It was one of the earliest public airings of the use of anti-Semitism for political purposes by black groups. Brown was forced to resign his CORE post, but his removal did little to suppress the growing anti-white and, parenthetically, anti-Jewish bias of the organization.

Because anti-Semitism has been prevalent in the Western world since the earliest days of Christianity, Jews are more sensitive to slurs against them than any of America's other ethnic minorities. Since the European Holocaust they tend to overreact and conjure a vision of annihilation not necessarily meant by the speaker. As a consequence, American Jews have learned how to turn the cutting edge of anti-Semitism away from themselves and project it onto their would-be persecutors.

The most widespread use that Jews have made of the public expressions of black anti-Semitism has been as a screen behind which Jewish agencies have been able to retreat from over-extended pro-Negro positions. The anti-Semitic mouthings of the militants have further allowed Jews to abandon Negro causes that impinge on their businesses, houses, schools and seniority rights without forcing them to change their liberal self-image. It is an image that Jews will pay a high price to maintain.

In addition, Jews' charges of anti-Semitism have occasionally been exaggerated and unwarranted. One case in point occurred in Philadelphia in the summer of 1967, when there had been rumors of an impending riot. In the wake of the Newark and Detroit explosions, the mayor issued a proclamation limiting public gatherings on public thoroughfares to twelve persons. Two of the local militants, Cecil Moore, then president of the city's NAACP chapter, and Stanley Branche of Freedom Now, took exception to the mayor's edict and put out a protesting broadside of their own which included a plea to boycott white-owned stores. Among other things the manifesto stated was "Don't spend your money with no white man who has given Tate [the mayor] and Rizzo [the police commissioner] orders to deny you the rights to walk the streets, talk on the streets, assemble on the streets, or stand on the street corner. Don't buy from whitey, buy from your black brothers."

Nowhere in the document were Jews mentioned. Yet

the City's Jewish Community Relations Council took to the radio, television, and newspapers to denounce the mimeographed sheet as an example of anti-Semitism.

On the other hand, in the New York City school strike of 1969, the Teachers Union, which is about two-thirds Jewish, denounced its black opponents in the Ocean Hill–Brownsville demonstration area as anti-Semites. In fact, black militants who had interested themselves in the dispute did circulate strongly anti-Semitic literature among teachers and parents in the Ocean Hill–Brownsville district. One pamphlet read: "Get off our backs, or your relatives in the Middle East will find themselves giving benefits to raise money to help you get out from under the terrible weight of an enraged black community . . ." and "it is impossible for the Middle East murderers of colored people to possibly bring to this important task the insight, the concern, the exposing of the truth that is a must if the years of brainwashing and self-hatred that have been taught to our black children by those blood-sucking exploiters and murderers is to be overcome." In addition to the leaflets, angry shouts of "Jew pig" and "you will go out in a pine box" were rained down on the heads of the hapless teachers whom the "community" wished to fire.

Yet, a careful study by the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith found no evidence that there was an organized effort behind the hateful expressions nor any connection between them and the leadership of the Ocean Hill–Brownsville community group.

Undaunted, the Teachers Union stated that anti-Semitism was a major issue in the dispute and they loudly voiced this accusation before New York City's huge Jewish population to rally its support to their side of the argument. Their success can be measured by the fact that Mayor Lindsay, a staunch supporter of decentralization and a former hero to the Jewish community, was subsequently greeted by boos in Jewish synagogues in Brooklyn.

David Spencer, the I.S. 201 activist who became head of

the East Harlem Demonstration District governing board, wrote: "What we see happening is that with an ingenious display of verbal gymnastics a large part of the Jewish Establishment is using the cry of 'anti-Semitism' to imply that black people are persecuting Jews . . . We are," he continued, "becoming anti-Semitic with every passing day that brings a new rash of news articles with charges and resolutions from this or that Jewish organization."

Acknowledging the fact that many Jews are "working tirelessly behind the scenes for self-determination in black and Puerto Rican communities," he added, referring to the fact that the union, by means of the strike and with the full support of Jewish public and political opinion, had managed to break the back of community control, "it is hard to keep from reacting against everyone Jewish when the full weight of the Jewish Establishment is not only beating our black and Puerto Rican communities, but also accusing us of being the aggressor."

Morton Yarmon of New York's American Jewish Committee has shown a more sophisticated understanding of the problem. "For various reasons—among them civil service and merit hiring—the teaching and welfare professions were open to Jews when others were closed to them. As a consequence the Jewish people moved heavily into the social services and teaching fields . . . These are exactly the two pressure points at which the Negro now demands that he be allowed to care for his own and teach his own."

As a result, school decentralization and community control are seen by some Jews as a direct threat to their positions.

The political uses of anti-Semitism and anti-anti-Semitism come as naturally to the practitioners of conventional American politics as they do to the militants and special-interest groups. In Philadelphia in 1966 a local reform club entered a candidate in the Democratic primary election. The reformer sought a newly created seat in the state legislature. The district's Democrats were about one-half Ne-

gro, largely poor, and one-half upper-middle-class liberal whites, about 40 percent of whom were also Jewish.

The reformer was a Jewish attorney. The organization's candidate was a Negro, an undertaker, the widow of a ward leader who had previously served in the state's General Assembly.

The Saturday before the election, the Negro portion of the district was flooded with materials urging the citizens of that section to "Vote for South Philadelphia's Only Negro Woman Legislator" and to "Stop the Great White Jewish Power."

Dismayed but undaunted, the reformers reproduced the piece with a head over it reading, "The Machine Will Do Anything to Stop a Reformer," and sent the revised edition of what is known at election time as scurrilous literature to the heavily Jewish divisions in the high-rise apartments. The reformer won by thirty-nine votes.

The average Jew is deeply troubled by Negro outbursts of anti-Semitism. However, even without the gratuitous attacks on the state of Israel and the Jewish merchant, it is very probable that the Jewish community, as distinguished from the students and the critical Jewish intelligentsia, would have been turned off by the black power movement because it is a movement which is profoundly critical of the materialistic and capitalistic values of American society, from which Jews have benefited. Jews are, by and large, the most determinedly capitalistic group in the world; they are its earliest entrepreneurs and among its most successful practitioners. Any attack on the values of individual enterprise is viewed by them as a personal assault.

Despite the heavy component of Jewish intellectuals who have been active in the socialist movement both in Europe and the United States, socialism has a long, if not honorable, tradition of anti-Semitism, and for the very same reasons the black nationalists have turned against Jews—their success as capitalists. Such leading French

socialist theorists as Proudhon and Blanqui ranted against Jewish financiers, and the American Populists were critical both of Jews and Negroes. It is therefore not surprising that the much less enlightened and less sophisticated black power leaders should have swallowed some of the myths concerning the "Jewish bankers" and be inspired by a kind of anti-capitalistic racism. Jews are also hostile to black power because it denigrates the United States, the country which has proven to be one of the happiest haven Jews have found in their two thousand years of wandering in the Western world.

The reaction to this emerging anti-Semitism of the militants has been complex: the sophisticated Jews, although they do not like it, understand it and to a certain extent tolerate it with a shrug of their shoulders; the Jews to whom it is directly addressed—merchants, landlords and to a lesser extent, teachers and social workers—are angry and enraged. The Jewish establishment groups have acted in still another way—they have begun to make attempts to buy off their enemies. In a fascinating way it is a recreation, albeit unconsciously, of the millennial pattern of the Jews in the Diaspora. At that time, reacting viscerally, Jews did not strike out but instead attempted to placate their enemies. And today in the board rooms across the country of the American Jewish Committee and of the Congress, discussions are now in progress about the Jewish image in the black ghetto. If there is a bad Jewish presence in the slums, it is argued, then it must be changed to a positive Jewish image.

In Philadelphia, members of the American Jewish Committee, with the help of Committee staff though not with Committee funds, are actually financing one of the more militant and outspoken street-corner leaders in the hope that he will turn his own energies and those of his gang followers into positive channels.

Those who would attempt to deal with the militants in this fashion are following a pattern long practiced in Eu-

rope by the powerless Jewish minority. That the pattern should survive even unto the third generation in America is indicative not just of altruism but of the deep roots of fear that still exist within the Jewish community even in this safe haven. Other groups with less deadly heritages have tended either to ignore the black militants or to physically move against them.

In some ways black power, in particular black political power, can be interpreted to fit into the ethnic spectrum of American politics. Many educated militants with roots in the middle class have or are attempting to make this marriage, while the older Negro organizations are trying to accommodate black power rhetoric into their essentially middle-class, integrated, coalition-oriented operations.

Perhaps this kind of black power was best defined by Stokely Carmichael, who said it is "black people coming together and either electing or forcing their representatives to speak for their needs. It is an economic and physical bloc that can exercise its strength in the black community instead of letting the job go to the Democratic or Republican parties or a white-controlled black man set up as a puppet to represent black people . . . black power recognizes the ethnic base of American politics . . . [but] it does not mean merely putting black faces into office. Black visibility is not black power . . . The power must be that of the community and emanate from there . . . Black politicians must stop being representatives of 'downtown machines,' whatever the cost might be in terms of lost patronage and holiday hand-outs."

Bobbing her neatly coiffed African-styled hairdo, Mattie Humphries, a middle-class, middle-aged Negro lady turned radical, further attempted to interpret the movement to a group of white, largely Jewish officials of inter-group agencies.

"Black power," she said, "brought attention to the fact that there is a need for a black structure. There needs to be a concerted effort to develop within black groups this

structure. I cannot after all be in a Jewish or Italian structure. Because we have had no structure of our own, we have been used as tools and not been in control of our own destiny. Black potential has not been developed by other structures. Black people need a unifying base to be able to negotiate with other groups. At stake are the humane values of Western civilization if blacks are not recognized as human beings."

What Mrs. Humphries was expressing was the continued longing of the vast number of Negroes, be they Uncle Toms or the fiercest of street-corner revolutionaries, to be allowed into the great American game of politics on equal terms. If Negroes are to take their place in conventional politics, they must rid themselves of white leadership. By far the most tenacious and numerous of this white leadership has been Jewish. This fact might well have accounted for, even if it does not excuse, the calculated insults offered to Jews in an effort to shake them loose.

Stokely Carmichael, for example, has rejected the coalition politics of most liberal Jews. In his book *Black Power* he points out the dangers of such a program: "One, that in present-day America, the interests of black people are not identical with the interest of liberal, labor or reform groups, who accept the legitimacy of the basic values of the society and are not interested in a major reorientation of it. Two, it is a fallacious assumption that a viable coalition can be effected between the politically and economically secure and the politically and economically insecure. Three, that political coalitions can be held together on the basis of appeals to conscience.

"As long as black people . . . remain politically dependent on the Democratic machine, their interests will be secondary to that machine.

"A political system that seeks only to manage conflict will not be able to serve a growing body of alienated black people. Black people must organize themselves without regard to what is traditionally acceptable and make demands

without regard to their initial respectability because respectable demands have not been enough."

To get a voice in the power structures, Carmichael advocates the forming of independent party groups, with the black community as the base of such political organizations.

"The black voter must defy those who would control his vote." The price of going along with the regulars is too high. The rewards of independence can be great.

"Without denying the overwhelming reality of poverty, we must affirm that the basic goal is not 'welfare colonialism' but inclusion of blacks at all levels of decision-making."

American politics, as both Mattie Humphries and Stokely Carmichael perceived, is profoundly nonideological and just as profoundly ethnic. Other minorities which have gained admittance into the larger society have done so through some combination of group power that included bloc voting, the purchase of political favors with money obtained from group-monopolized occupations, and the purchase of political preference with the money obtained illegally. The Irish chose the first route and employed political patronage to lift themselves up. The Jew took the second path and used their foothold in industries like the ladies' garment trade to boost themselves. The Italian effort was aided by their control of the gambling, narcotics, and prostitution rackets. If Carmichael's pragmatic pre-Panther design is followed, Negroes will seek power by capitalizing on their numbers and strategic location rather than their ability to create fear.

Liberals, and in particular Jewish liberals, have for too long failed to recognize the ethnic power base involved in their own successes and have attempted to direct their Negro friends and allies along a political road that really does not exist for them.

Charles Silberman, the *Fortune* editor and author of *Crisis in Black and White,* pointed out that "liberalism is

irrelevant" to the average Negro. It is "out of touch with present realities . . . We have developed a conception of civil rights as involving the rights of individuals; our whole attack on prejudice and discrimination rests on the demand that people be treated as individuals, not as members of a group. This philosophy, I submit, is a rationalization *after* the fact—a rationalization which ignores or denies the true history of ethnic groups in the United States. The plain fact is that every ethnic group that has moved into the mainstream of American life has done so in large part through the exercise of group power . . . The crucial thing about the melting pot is that it never happened . . . the solitary Negro seeking admission into the white world through unusual achievement has been replaced by the organized Negro, insisting upon a legitimate share for his group . . . [Therefore] the reduction of . . . tensions is incompatible with the main thrust and meaning of the Negro protest movement's demand for power."

It is this demand which has roused the racism of part of the nation and fashioned it into the living nightmare of the white backlash. Strife, however, was inevitable. No group surrenders power without a struggle. The conflict between Jews and Negroes is about the Negro demand for power and the Jewish resistance to surrendering it. Negroes are resentful of the Jewish economic presence in the ghetto and wish to replace it with their own. They are angry about the education their children are getting and wish to gain the power in the public school systems that the Jews now have. They are no longer content to be represented by Jews in the old liberal coalition, or in the unions, or even in their own civil rights agencies. Thus, much of the angry demagoguery has been directed at Jews. Ironically, just as this demagoguery is reaching its apex —the Jews are slipping out of contact and out of context. They are leaving the traditional Mom and Pop stores on the strip. The promised increase in public housing, federal low-income home ownership programs, the growth

of black cooperatives and the political necessity of strict housing code enforcement will shrink the base of Jewish slumlords. The bars and taprooms are already managed by blacks with an increasing number claiming ownership. The Jewish politicians are rapidly giving way to Negroes and the white men who dominate these blacks are rarely Jews. They are usually Irishmen who control organization politics in the cities.

Even in the schools, the social welfare agencies, and the civil service the Jews are fading out. Having passed almost in their entirety into the middle and upper-middle classes, no longer barred from any of the professions or from the upper reaches of management, they do not need nor desire in any significant number, posts in these bureaucracies. In another generation, the Jews will have removed themselves from the black frontier and Negroes will find themselves occupying the spots now held by Jews. Then it might be the Puerto Ricans who will be baying at their heels.

However, the problem with Negroes who are now trying to enter the system through the portals used by other ethnic groups is that they might be too late to be included in the major benefits of this old-style politics. The European immigrants who settled in the cities at the turn of the century were welcomed by expanding political machines who took their votes in exchange for economic advantages. These machines were decentralized. Working on a ward level, they were able to give individualized attention to grievances as well as personal representation to constituents. The old-line ward organizations also exercised considerably more influence than do their modern counterparts over public construction and public employment.

Negroes have arrived on the scene at a time when public building jobs are controlled by well-established white, ethnic-oriented unions and when political patronage is at a minimum. Despite their numbers, Negroes also continue to be underrepresented in city councils, state legis-

latures in Congress, in the judiciary and at all appointive governmental levels.

Negro political history, however, did not begin, as did other ethnic groups, at the gates of the big cities of the North. It started in the rural South at the end of the Civil War. After the accommodation of 1878 that allowed Northern capital interests to remain in the South without the need for federal troops, support for Negro civil rights disappeared. Despite their massive disenfranchisement, Negroes still maintained their Republican identification.

When Negroes began to vote again in the North, they continued to vote Republican. The GOP, with all its faults, was still the party of abolition, while the Democrats continued until the advent of FDR to be, at least in Negro eyes, the party of slavery and disenfranchisement.

It was in the long politically barren era between the end of Reconstruction and the beginning of the New Deal that Negroes became accustomed to accepting the word for the deed. It was all that they were offered, and therefore it was only to be expected that rhetoric would come to replace reality. Negroes during this time learned to put inordinate stock in the ritual repetition of avowals of high regard by white politicians and wordy promises of performance by black ones. Delivery was rarely a condition of reelection. This confusion between word and deed is still the besetting sin of most black politicians, whether they are militants or organization hacks.

The political history of the Jews in America is in many ways the exact opposite of the Negroes. A Jewish presence in American politics did not exist much before the beginning of the twentieth century. Jews were too few in number and they were too scattered to act as a voting bloc even if they had a mind to do so.

The last thing in the world these nineteenth-century American Jews were interested in was in being a separate and identifiable group. For the most part, they adopted the politics of the WASP aristocracy and in the North,

where the majority of the Jews settled, they joined the Grand Old Party rather than the party of the Irish and the working-class immigrants. In the South, they became Democrats.

The existing Jewish presence in America is very largely Eastern European and dates back no further than the 1880's. Part of an enormous swarm of poor and persecuted immigrants, they did not find the resources of the country as open to them as they had been to previous generations of Jews. Instead of scattering across the land as earlier Jewish immigrants did, they settled in clusters in the slums. In many cases they were common laborers.

Unlike their predecessors, however, they were also concerned with group identity and group survival. The richness of their communal life in the United States made it possible for a large number of poor immigrants to develop a politics of issues rather than of patronage. For a period of close to a quarter of a century the major political energies of the European Jews were channeled into neither the Democratic nor the Republican parties but instead into a variety of socialist and Zionist clubs and organizations.

It was the sons and daughters of these shtetel Jews who, in their desire to be Americanized, first ventured into conventional politics. In doing so they brought with them the issue orientation of their parents. To a large extent these Jews started out as Republicans, although Wilson's idealism attracted a following among them. This beachhead was greatly expanded by the nomination of Al Smith in 1928. Many immigrant Jews and their grown children made an easy identification with Smith, his derby, his cigar and his patois. The designation of a Catholic seemed to them a signpost upon the party's gate. The thirteen-year Roosevelt reign completed their conversion. These Jews have supplied the Democratic party with much of its intellectual power, its idealism and its moral fervor. They have been among the strongest and most consistent champions of Negro rights within the party and without it.

In politics, as in almost all things American, Jews have done well. Considering that they comprise only 3 percent of the population, they have been, until the advent of Nixon, able to claim one out of the nine Supreme Court Justices since the appointment of Louis Brandeis in 1916. On the lower judiciary they have also been more than adequately represented. In the Senate and the Congress as well as in the nation's fifty state legislatures and thousands of municipal and county councils, they have received their fair share of seats. It is not unusual for a Jew to serve as a mayor or as a governor.

Negroes, on the other hand, receive dramatically less than their 11 percent share of public offices and judicial appointments. They have had a Supreme Court Justice only since 1965, and, since the end of the Reconstruction only one Senator. They have scarcely 1.3 percent of the seats in Congress.

What Negroes and Jews do have in common is that the overwhelming majority of their office-holders are Democrats. The Democratic party of the Northern Negro is, of course, very different from the Bourbon party of the old South, but it does have certain consistent ideological and historical bonds. It is the nation's oldest political organization, predating the GOP by a century and a half. As such, it was not only the party of slavery, but the party of Thomas Jefferson, the party of limited national ambition and the party of agriculture. Its anti-Negro bias originally attracted the first of the large-scale immigrant groups—the Irish, who saw in the black a potential competitor. Its pro-agricultural, anti-industrial base made it easier for it to forge an alliance with the newly forming labor organizations and through them with the ethnic minorities in the growing cities.

Despite its Confederate base, the Democratic party has been the majority party in most of the nation's big cities since the end of World War I. Its leaders realized at that time that they could never hope to take power nationally

with a party devoted solely to the interests of rural white Southerners. The Democratic party accordingly looked to the poor in the North to complement the poor of the South. In recognition of these Northern urban poor it awarded its presidential nomination to Al Smith in 1928. Smith was the first non-WASP presidential candidate of a major party.

The election of Franklin Roosevelt heralded the creation of a long-lasting majority Democratic coalition, which is only now beginning to crumble. Held together by the glue of economic policy were the impoverished, rabid racists of the rural South, the Catholic blue-collar workers, the elderly, and the Northern Negroes. Added to this base and attracted by its idealism and air of creative inventiveness were the Jews, the liberal reformers and the intellectuals. The party of the white Southern WASP became the party of the ethnic coalition.

In its ability to hold in alliance a collection of groups who mutually loathe and fear each other, the Democratic party performs a valuable social function beyond that of being a vehicle for the pursuit and exercise of power. The antagonisms are not only between urban Northern blacks and rural Southern whites but between blue-collar Catholics and Jewish intellectuals, between WASP reformers and Irish machine politicians. The white working-class Catholics, for example, are among the most openly anti-Negro and anti-Semitic class in the country outside of the poor white Southerners. It is from this group that George Wallace drew much of the support he gained outside of the South that did not come from transplated Southerners. Yet to win enough votes to obtain the kind of bread and butter legislation this class needs and wants, it has allied itself within the Democratic party, which it has largely given shape, with both Negroes and Jews.

On all but economic issues, the working-class Catholic Democrats find themselves pitted against the Negroes and Jews. This cleavage was most clearly evident in the dissent

over the Vietnam War. The Catholics, with their rigid outlook, are patriotic in the old-fashioned mold and unquestioning in their faith in America. They react with violent distaste to dissent, skepticism and the liberal mentality.

Although the Negroes and the Jews are in many ways the most compatible groups within the Democratic party, they, too, frequently find themselves on opposite sides in internecine party struggles. It is on the subject of reform and on the concept of politics as public service that Jews have most frequently broken with Negroes. The origins of this conflict go back to the Protestant ethic and the ethos of the old-line WASP.

In America the native middle-class white Protestant acts out of a political tradition wholly antipathetical to that which the European Catholic immigrants brought with them. The WASP style of politics puts its emphasis upon the obligation of the individual to participate in public affairs and to seek the good of the community as a whole, impartially, honestly and efficiently. The immigrant style of politics is quite the opposite. Unfamiliar with independent political action and familiar with hierarchy and authority, these activists saw politics in terms of personal, material drives and personal loyalties. The machine which they created serves as a vehicle for individual advancement, politically and economically. The individuals connected with it are not interested in its program but seek instead status, power and income.

Not surprisingly, the original leaders of political reform were Protestants who were opposed to the machine. They were shortly joined by the Jews who already had an issue-oriented tradition and then by other ethnic groups as they, too, became assimilated into middle-class society and sought to adopt the prevailing white Protestant style. Although a surprisingly large number of Jews have served both in high appointive and elective office, Jews have not, as James Q. Wilson, the MIT political scientist, points out,

"sought ethnic recognition in politics to the same degree that other groups have. It may be," he speculated, "that they never doubted their worth as a group [to the same extent as other minorities did] and therefore have not felt any need for public reassurance."

In fact, Jewish candidates cast in the mold of WASP reformers almost always do better at the polls with Jewish voters than the more obviously ethnic candidates who make a straight appeal to an ethnic vote.

The great bulk of the Negroes who oppose the Jews are poor and view politics, as have other poor people, with pragmatic cynicism as a way for individual advancement, not group betterment. They see little material benefit for themselves coming from the causes that the reformers espouse, although civil service has on the national, state and local levels opened many positions to Negroes on merit that were previously reserved for white patronage seekers. Nonetheless, Negroes frequently feel that by wiping out patronage and attacking ethnic politics, reformers are removing the only legitimate political tool which Negroes have to gain power.

The reformers' attacks on crime and corruption are also viewed with suspicion by Negroes. The numbers racket and the illegal gin mill have frequently provided the Negro community not only with much needed surcease but have been for blacks, as they have for Italians, a way into the middle class when other avenues have been closed to them.

The middle- and upper-middle-class Negroes, who might naturally be expected to interest themselves in reform politics and ally themselves with these Jews as a further way of identifying with the white world, have for the most part turned their backs on politics altogether. They find political life too mired in the ghetto and they are frightened by the nearness of the abyss of this lower-depth life. Frequently they not only feel, but are, powerless to create a real political force in their own communities. Thus,

though they share many of the ideals of the reformers and the Jews, they remain passive.

It is only with the advent of black power that the upper ranks of Negro society have seen the necessity of making at least some common cause with their less fortunate brothers. The major showpieces of this phenomenon have been such outfits as Newark's United Brothers, Chicago's Black Consortium, the Black Political Forum in Philadelphia, Detroit's Self-Determination Federation, Washington, D.C.'s United Black Front, and Los Angeles' Black Congress.

Writing of coalition with liberal-reform movements, Carmichael and Charles Hamilton noted, "Reform-politics . . . frequently are not tuned in to the primary goals of black people. They establish their own goals and then demand that black people identify with them. When black leaders begin to articulate goals in the interest of black people first, the reformers tend, more often than not, to term this 'racist' and to drop off. Reformers push such 'good government' programs as would result in posts being filled by professional, middle-class people." Blue-ribbon candidates would be visible at the top of the ticket and be present at the bottom, too.

Reformers generally reject ticket balancing and select candidates on merit, which usually means white and middle class. Seldom do reformers advocate grass-roots ghetto leaders (usually they can't find them) and push for elections-at-large instead of by district, which decreases the claims for Negro representation.

Although reformers are passionately committed to a militant stand on civil rights, they shy away from militant organizations because they find them too race-conscious. "Coalitions," Carmichael said, before he became a Panther, "can be useful for limited times and on minor issues where both sides have equal amounts to gain and where each party has its own power base."

Thus, reformers, particularly Jewish reformers, have

been unable to recruit any substantial number of Negroes

en when those reformers, as they
es, fought battles that were of large
rn to Negroes and no one else. It is
ed New Politics, whether of the re-
n the Democratic party or of the
nus, will ever attract any substantial
er of blacks. Negroes in turn, even
who have benefited from the liberal
been resentful of Jewish leadership.
l coalition" Negroes have remained
y the silent partner. White liberals
name of, Negroes and Negroes have
er than the subjects of civic action.
ne for, about, or to Negroes, not by
ave resented being the perpetual re-

omax wrote about the problems of
white liberals in a book called the
nerica. He pointed out "that white
y stingy with economic and political
view of the Negro is still flecked with

mer Associate Director of the Na-
erican Jewish Committee, continued
The American liberal [and in par-
eeded the Negro as a victim to acti-
the national level in the past. Para-
now needs the Negro as a seeker for
dealism on the local level—the new-
justice and unrest."
ntly that Jewish liberals have shown
e Negroes the limelight. The best ex-
irit was the symbolic nomination of
ng Phillips of Washington, D.C., by
Democratic National Convention in
e District of Columbia delegation,

to their standards ev
have in many instanc
and immediate concer
doubtful if the so-call
formist variety withi
radical third-party ge
or meaningful numbe
middle-class Negroes
Jewish concern, have

In the "great libera
the junior and usuall
speak for, and in the
been the objects rath
Things have been do
them. And Negroes h
cipients.

The late Louis Lo
black liberals with w
White Problem in A
liberals are notoriousl
power and that their
condescension."

David Danzig, for
tional office of the Am
Lomax's argument. "
ticular the Jew] has n
vate his idealism on
doxically enough, he
power to activate his
est frontier of social in

It is only very rece
any willingness to giv
ample of this new sp
the Reverend Channi
Philip Sterne at the
Chicago in 1968. Th

originally pledged to Robert Kennedy, was predominantly Negro with a sprinkling of WASPs and Jews.

However, if the Negro is to effectively build power on a black community base modeled on the structure built by the Irish, the Jews and the Italians, who preceded him into Northern politics, he will have to do it within the confines of the Democratic party. For this party has been to date the only real vehicle where Negroes have been able to legitimately exercise any power.

Oddly enough, the party's faith was most clearly proved at the 1968 Democratic Convention. The story actually began in 1964, when SNCC organized the Freedom Democratic party. Suffering humiliation and physical brutality, the black college students that year managed to create a statewide duplicate political organization in Mississippi. Claiming that the regular Democratic party had systematically excluded Negroes from participating in its procedures, the Mississippi Freedom Democratic party came to Atlantic City and demanded to be seated at the 1964 Convention as the state's Democratic delegation. The plea was met by a token offer of two seats. Heartbroken, the MFD turned down the compromise and the young blacks declared their disillusionment not only with the party but with the system. Yet four years later, when the stakes were much higher than those in Atlantic City, the MFD was seated by the national Democratic party and recognized by it as the official Democratic party organization of Mississippi.

A century after the end of the Civil War the Democratic party has finally reconciled the split between its espousal of the underprivileged of both races and the Negro phobia of its original poor-white Southern base. It did the unthinkable and chose the Negro over the Southern white. In fact, the old Southern party is fast on its way to becoming the party of the Negro and the liberal. The "nigger"-baiting rhetoric which had been its stock-in-trade has been relinquished to the Wallacites; while the ordinary

Southern segregationist, at least on a national level, has become a Republican, for the GOP is now more than ever the party of the small- and medium-sized businessman, the WASP and the status quo.

Dramatizing this turn of events was a gathering in Atlanta, Georgia, of more than 200 of the South's 380-odd Negro elected officials—all Democrats. Said outgoing Attorney General Ramsey Clark of the affair, "Four years ago we could have held this meeting in a phone booth and not interfered with anyone who wanted to make a call."

In forcing the party to choose the Negro over the Southern racist, the Jews, liberals and intellectuals played no small part. It is the Democratic party that produced Julian Bond, the Georgia state legislator who has become one of the leaders of the New Politics. And it is through the Democratic party that Carl Stokes, Richard Hatcher and Kenneth Gibson became mayors of Cleveland, Ohio, Gary, Indiana, and Newark, New Jersey. All were able to attract enough white Democrats to their solid Negro base to win election. In these cases their white allies were the city's reform Democrats who have a large component of Jewish adherents. Both Hatcher and Stokes won their nominations over the fierce opposition of the local Democratic-Catholic dominated organizations but received assistance from national Democratic figures in their general election campaigns.

Hatcher, in analyzing his victory, pointed out that though Negroes comprise 55 percent of the population of Gary, Indiana, they are substantially less than a majority of the registered voters. In winning, Hatcher received 95 percent of the black vote but he also obtained 24 percent of the white vote in Jewish and professional areas, while getting only 8 percent of the vote in the white Catholic, heavily Democratic working-class sections, whose residents were largely of Central European descent. Hatcher was able to obtain the white liberal and reform vote because he ran on a platform of cracking down on crime and corruption,

thus winning the confidence of the business and professional community.

In Washington, D.C., a city with a heavy Negro majority, it was a Democratic President who forced through a semblance of home rule and appointed a Negro, Walter Washington, the Capital's mayor.

Negroes have already demonstrated that they hold the balance of power in many Northern Democratic strongholds. For example, in Detroit in 1961, the Negro vote catapulted an unknown, Jerome Cavanaugh, into the mayor's office, defeating a candidate backed by both the United Auto Workers and the business community. In Philadelphia, James Tate was twice elected mayor by strong black pluralities while receiving less than half of the white votes cast. In both these cities, Negro votes bought concessions in terms of jobs, prestige and visibility and helped remold budget priorities away from the subsidization of the city's large real estate, banking, commercial and institutional interests and toward low-income housing, jobs and public education.

Although the Democratic party offers the Negro his best hope of getting a piece of the action, its political machinery also sets dangerous and delusive traps. In Chicago, Negroes supplied 118,000 of the 139,000 votes that reelected Mayor Daley in 1963, and received little for their effort. The result, and not parenthetically, has been a riot a year for the Windy City since then.

The experience in Chicago is not unique. Despite the encouragement in the North and increasing incentives in the South, Negroes have discovered that their votes usually buy them less than the votes of other groups, fewer parks, libraries, schools and health services, dirtier streets, worse lighting and minimal police protection. Their voting strength has not protected them from cavalier displacement by urban renewal and highway construction. Nor has their vote secured the majority of blacks integrated schools or housing.

One of the major reasons that Negroes are short-changed is the political machine.

In theory, the two major American political parties are thoroughly democratic even if they are not very participatory. On the lowest level, the precinct workers are selected directly by the voters of their polling area. These workers, at least in theory, choose their own ward or district leader. The district leader in turn votes for the county-wide party leadership, which in turn selects the state leadership and so on up the ladder in storybook fashion. Candidates on each of these levels are selected by these democratically elected leaders and then put to the test of a primary election where outsiders, too, can make a run for it. The model takes into mild account some of the gross citizen-group pressures on the parties and postulates that the elected government as a whole is an arena where the various legitimate pressure groups slug it out in public, make accommodations to each other and then agree to live with the results.

In fact, some of the most decisive influences are wielded in private. For monetary consideration they are allowed to write legislation, amend zoning and building codes, veto appointments to regulatory agencies and departments and suggest candidates for public office. In the real model the needs of the many rarely get even equal consideration with the desires of the few. Negroes, because they have the least to give and are the most disorganized, have scant leverage in this hidden arena.

The clearing house for these transactions is the political machine that was born after the Civil War and which thrives on the poor and the apathetic voter whether he be an immigrant from Europe or the South. Fueled by hordes of Irish, Polish, Italians and Slavs, its power in the cities faded briefly with the end of World War II and the assimilation and acculturation of the children and grandchildren of the original immigrants, who no longer needed the intercession of a party worker to get them jobs, schol-

arships, Christmas turkeys or tons of coal. The flood of rural black immigrants in the fifties and sixties, however, brought it vigorously back to life.

The existence of the machine depends on its ability to control votes. The poorer and less educated the citizen, the more likely he is to trade his vote for immediate favors, which include such things as direct monetary payment, a shot of whiskey, mediation with the police force, and help in applying for relief. The votes most crucial to the machine are those cast in the primary election, where party officials as well as party candidates for public office are selected. Most voters, however, place less value on their primary vote than on their general vote and are more easily influenced by the party worker in this election. The machine is most interested in the least significant offices at the bottom of the ticket, which are most essential to party control, while the voter is most interested in the candidates for major office at the top.

One of the prime aspects of the Democratic political machine is that it thinks in ethnic terms. Election tickets must be balanced and due weight given to representing all the various factions that make up the Democratic party.

The techniques of the Northern machines, in regard to Negroes, dovetail perfectly with the traditions of these Southern immigrants. Intimidated by their history, the ghetto Negro has shown little interest until recently in gaining real political power in the North commensurate with the size of his vote.

To deal with these sullen masses, the "machine" picks one Negro to act as an intermediary to the masses. In the privacy of the smoke-filled backroom, this is known as the "plantation system."

The "plantation foreman" then selects and is responsible for all Negro party officials, candidates and political appointments. The arrangement has many similarities to the plantation system of the South; it also guarantees a minimum of social commitment for a maximum of votes.

In Chicago in the 1920's, Edward Wright, the first Negro leader of the South Side's black second ward, used to brag, "Every conspicuous political appointment of a colored man or woman in Chicago or Illinois . . . was brought about by the second ward Republican organization under my leadership."

Chicago's present "plantation foreman" is Congressman William Dawson. He has held the post since 1939, when he led his machine from the Republican to the Democratic party. His power to deliver votes extends over most of the poor Negro areas on the South Side of Chicago. As a result, Dawson has been a key member of the ruling circle of the Democratic machine. To date, he has yet to use that power to push, as distinguished from talk, publicly about fair employment, open housing or an end to de facto segregation. To do so would have created strains within the Democratic coalition and provoked the violent hostility of the Irish, Polish and Italian political chieftains. If Dawson wants to maintain his position, he must keep quiet; yet Dawson, before he was co-opted by the Democratic party, was an outspoken and vigorous champion of race causes.

"Even in corruption the Negro is accorded second-class citizenship," Kenneth Clark noted sardonically in his book *Dark Ghetto* (1965). This is because Negro politicians rarely if ever have any say in the really crucial municipal decisions of who gets what construction contract and whose land is bought for a public project. "Negroes," commented Clark, "felt it an ironic confirmation of their low status when the first Negro to be Borough President of Manhattan lost his position in a scandal that involved not a million-dollar conspiracy but a less than $5,000 apartment renovation."

Negro politicians, denied access to the real plums of patronage and power, tend to further weaken their position by their incessant squabbles. It is only very recently that Negroes have been able to vote in a large enough

bloc to ensure that they have at least racial representation. Harlem, not unsurprisingly, was the area where this kind of black political power emerged.

The flamboyant Adam Clayton Powell was the first elected Negro official who had a power base completely independent of white political leadership. But Powell must be understood, as Kenneth Clark points out, "in terms of the massive pathology of the ghetto, where a powerless people seek a concrete hero who will fight the battles they cannot fight for themselves. All the better if the hero defies and taunts the white enemy. Here is the gratifying joy of vicarious revenge without the attendant penalties of a real encounter."

Powell, himself the son of a Baptist minister, is the grandson of a St. Louis white beer baron. He could, if he had chosen, "passed" into the white world. He could also have remained solely a playboy. He did not.

He first came to the notice of the Harlem community in the 1930's, when he joined a picket line at 125th Street to help Negro girls get sales jobs in Woolworth's Harlem branch. In the 1940's he made a public issue of the fact that the colleges in New York City had no Negro teachers. He was elected to Congress in 1945, and his name subsequently became associated with all attempts to pass civil rights legislation during the next decade.

Unlike most of the scattering of other Negro representatives in Congress, in the country's state legislatures, or in a variety of municipal councils, Powell was never afraid to speak up for Negro causes. Nor has he ever been unwilling to exploit the emotional needs of what in a sense was a nationwide black constituency. A leader constantly in search of a following, he allied himself alternately and sometimes simultaneously with the civil rights movement, the Black Muslims, Martin Luther King, and the black militants.

As chairman of the House Committee on Education and Labor, he vigorously and expeditiously pushed through

many of the early "great society" programs. When he was temporarily expelled from Congress for misusing government funds and lost his seniority, most of his constituency believed that he was being punished not for the sins of venality, of which many white politicians are equally culpable and in some cases even more so, but the sins of pride and arrogance. He was, blacks felt, being humiliated for being an "uppity nigger," for being independent and for being outspoken in his black assertiveness.

In recent years Powell's waning interest in his Washington post, his illness, and the rising number of young militants in his district have eroded his support. And in 1970 a new black challenger using the very same issues that originally catapulted Powell into office defeated him.

Powell's early successful handling of a Negro power base has not gone unnoticed nor uncopied. It was this example that inspired Stokely Carmichael in 1966 to lead a delegation of black SNCC students in a voter registration drive in Lowndes County, Alabama, where blacks greatly outnumber whites. Putting on a pair of faded dungarees, slowing down his speech and blurring his crisp Trinidad pronunciation, he added hundreds of new names to the election rolls and helped to organize the original Black Panther party.

The question then, according to Carmichael, was, once a sufficient number of Negroes had been registered, how could that vote be best used to gain the security, justice and economic benefits that the people most needed. The conventional wisdom said that "the salvation of the black man lay in the Democratic party." Carmichael rebelled because of the 1964 experience of the Freedom Democratic party. He could not visualize that only two years later the MFD would be Mississippi's regular Democratic party. With great and painstaking effort, the SNCC staff researched Alabama election laws, registered 900 new voters, petitioned to set up a new party, held a party convention and conducted a primary election. They did the

only kind of "nitty-gritty" work that can produce a real political organization.

In the election that followed, Carmichael and his band came face to face with the fears and shame bred into Southern Negroes. Crestfallen, they watched Negro after Negro vote for white candidates, explaining "we aren't ready to have a colored sheriff. The white folks wouldn't like it one bit." Yet, in 1968, using the machinery SNCC had set up, Negroes did elect black candidates in Lowndes County. But by that time, the radicals and militants who had first organized them had lost all interest in reformist politics or in working within the system.

Julian Bond, Carl Stokes, Richard Hatcher and Kenneth Gibson are obvious followers of the trail blazed by Powell. They owe their election to the independent support they have built for themselves in the black community. The logical extension of the Powell-Bond-Stokes-Hatcher-Gibson victories will be the takeover by Negroes of the municipal governments in a majority of the nation's biggest cities by the turn of the twenty-first century. The immutable demographic facts are that by 1980 Philadelphia, Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago and St. Louis will have black majorities.

The immediate effect of this shift of middle-class whites to the suburbs has been to increase the power of the traditional political machine in the cities. The question is, Can Negroes gain control of the machine that their votes fuel? And if so, will they be able to use it for their own benefit in the way that groups such as the Irish have done? If they do gain such power, will they use it to support those services so badly needed by the poor Negro community, such as intensive education, health, low-income housing and job creation?

What will be the white reaction to the accession to power of Negroes in these crucial areas? The shape of the answer to this question can already be seen—regional government. There are, of course, many excellent reasons for

the creation of large governmental units that would end the fragmentation between the central-city cores and their surrounding suburbs, but the most impelling reason for this consolidation in all likelihood will not be to simplify taxation, to improve education, to end air or water pollution, but to ensure against Negro hegemony over the resources of the old city. Regional government will remove the threat of Negro numerical superiority in any important governmental units.

Regional government, however, is a rational answer to white fears. The politics of backlash is not. The virulence of the anti-Negro issue was demonstrated in 1964 when the Republican party nominated Barry Goldwater and adopted the so-called Southern strategy. Nationally it failed then, but it was essentially the Southern strategy that Richard Nixon followed to victory four years later. The appearance of George Wallace, who drew 13 percent of the popular vote—9 percent outside of the South—took much of the obvious sting, though none of the meaning, out of Nixon's campaign. Throughout, the GOP standard-bearer was careful never to enter a slum and to restrict his announced solution to urban problems to the law-and-order theme.

In the intervening years anti-Negro campaigns have been raised on a host of local and regional levels and in a variety of guises. In Georgia, for example, liberal Ellis Arnell was defeated in a bid for the governorship by Lester Maddox, whose sole platform was an openly avowed racism. In California, too, Ronald Reagan, whose views on race are known not to be progressive, was elected governor, defeating the moderate incumbent, Pat Brown.

In state after state and locality after locality, open-housing ordinances were turned back, school-bond issues for predominantly Negro school systems were defeated, and busing for the purpose of integration reviled. In the cold light of this century's seventh decade, the final liberation

of the Negro appears a long way off. The country is in retreat from its former commitment. It remains to be seen whether the pressure from the black community will continue and if it does, if it will continue along violent lines. If the violence escalates, how will the country act? It is possible that as tolerance for Negro demands weakens and black threats increase, magnified through the mass media, the majority of Americans will opt for an outright police state.

Carl Stokes, in a mid-term interview, assessed the future of the cities and the political future of Negroes. "I believe," he said, "that there is a nationwide struggle going on to maintain civilian control of the police departments and that cities have become a battleground for survival of both the poor and of the democratic traditions of this nation . . . Things are going to get somewhat worse before they get better, that is until the country is painfully aware of the need for its maximum involvement.

"It is war. These cities have become a battleground. I don't mean a battleground exclusively in the sense of people with guns, that's just part of it.

"It's a battleground for survival.

"The people have flocked to these big cities for a chance to live—not for freedom like the Negro migrated twenty years ago to try and find.

"It's basic, fundamental survival and the police react to this as those of military mind have for centuries. They've equipped to use force . . . it is the end of democracy if you succumb to this . . . you must have civilian authority . . .

"This is nothing but the age-old cry of the Army taking over, and once they do, then democracy . . . [is] gone."

In hopes of regaining control of Cleveland's constabulary, Stokes appointed the army's only retired Negro General, Benjamin O. Davis, Police Chief. Davis lasted only a few months. He quit over the issue of civilian control of the

police, accusing Stokes of aiding and abetting the enemies of the force. As a result, Davis became, for a short time, a political figure.

Cities all across the country, as Stokes pointed out, are dramatically expanding their police forces and upping these forces' salaries. In Philadelphia, the city's most popular figure is not the mayor, but the police chief, Frank Rizzo.

At the very least, there will be a hiatus on further Negro advancement. It is a pause that could last for a generation before a drive toward integration could be renewed and its benefits extended to working-class Negroes. Despite the ramblings of the more paranoid militants, the civil rights movement did secure the position of the middle-class Negro and offer him an acceptable, if not a complete, level of integration.

The future of all Negroes as equal members of an interracial society depends, however, on the revitalization of the liberal coalition; the mainstay of such a coalition being the Negro-Jewish alliance.

It has been said by such experts as Will Maslow that this alliance is dead. The old alliance was between middle-class Negroes and Jews. It was devoted to the destruction of legalized segregation. On this level, the alliance remains in fact. When events pushed demands beyond this level, the majority of Jews and the Jewish establishment refused to follow.

The electoral alliance between Jews and Negroes, at least on the national level, still exists. While Catholics are increasingly voting Republican or flirting with radical extremists like George Wallace, Jews and Negroes have maintained an 80 percent allegiance to the Democratic party.

Despite the loud pleas of militants, it is unlikely that Negroes will in large numbers defect to a black third party, though it does seem highly probable that they will vote increasingly along race lines. The Jews on their side

are as equally unlikely to ever be recruited to the politics of backlash because they fear, and justifiably, the effects of an avowedly racial politics on them.

Although Jews are inclined more and more to vote against Negroes on local issues, they are unlikely ever to vote for an avowedly anti-Negro candidate. This seemingly paradoxical position was clearly seen in 1966 in Maryland. That year there was a primary fight in the Democratic party for the gubernatorial nomination. One candidate ran an openly anti-Negro campaign, and specifically fought against the adoption of open-housing legislation. The second candidate was an open-housing advocate. When the votes were counted the Polish, Italian, German and Bohemian areas in the city of Baltimore had voted for the anti-Negro candidate. The Jewish wards had gone for the open-housing advocate.

In the same year, however, Jewish voters in California voted along with other whites against an open-housing ordinance there. Even in traditionally liberal New York, Jewish voters in the same year joined with other middle-class white voters in turning down a civilian police review board. It was a vote interpreted as anti-Negro by the black populace of that city.

It is on the local levels that the strains will be greatest and where the divergence of interests between Negroes and Jews is most likely to show itself in opposition voting patterns. As long as Negroes remain the loyal, if restive minions of the Democratic political machines in cities like Philadelphia and Chicago, they will find Jews voting against them on reform issues.

In New York City, a Republican mayor, John Lindsay, was elected in 1965. He got nearly half of the traditionally Democratic Jewish vote, although his opponent was a Jew. Negroes on the other hand largely gave their allegiance to Lindsay's Jewish opponent. In 1969, Lindsay, particularly in the school decentralization dispute, championed Negroes at what Jews believed was their expense.

Jews hesitated to vote for Lindsay. Negroes voted heavily for the mayor's re-election while Jews divided along class lines. The richer the Jew, the more likely he was to have voted for Lindsay. Because Jews have been relatively successful, over half fell into the middle- and upper-middle classes. They voted for the mayor, leaving the Democratic candidate, Mario Procaccino, with little more than the traditional blue-collar Democrats.

The growing political divergence between Jews and Negroes may be a short-lived phenomenon. Jews, being the most socially mobile of all the ethnic groups, are leaving the cities and areas near heavy concentrations of Negroes at a greater rate than any of the other remaining white urbanites. In the next two decades the proportion of Jews left in the cities and in direct contact with Negroes, either on the strip, in the schools or in the welfare bureaucracy, will be insignificant.

The fact that Jews and Negroes will no longer have the possibilities for real dispute may not, however, end the growing black anti-Semitism. If history is any kind of guide, we might well expect an increase in this ugly scapegoating.

Fed by legend, spurred on by the mass media, supported by the long tradition of anti-Semitism in the Christian world, Negroes might readily seek common ground with whites in using anti-Semitism as a safe displacement for their rage both against the larger society and themselves for their own failures.

Certainly German anti-Semitism in the 1930's and Eastern European anti-Semitism in the 1960's were not based on a real evaluation of the Jewish role in those societies. All it takes is a prevailing atmosphere of irrationalism to create a fertile soil for the growth of this kind of hatred.

If the level of abuse by black militants against Jews should continue or rise unopposed or be only weakly opposed by other Negro groups, Jews will continue to retreat even on a national level from any and all commit-

ments to Negro causes and alliances. The rate of Jewish contribution, which made up a large share of the budgets of such groups as the NAACP, the Urban League, the SCLC and the A. Philip Randolph Foundation, has already dropped precipitously. The next convenient exit for Jews would be from the Democratic party.

Should either the Jew or the Negro desert his position in the liberal coalition, which realistically exists only within the Democratic party, the nation would undoubtedly veer sharply and rapidly to the right. It has been the tacit electoral alliance between Negroes and Jews which has lain at the heart of Democratic party liberal politics and has acted as a brake not only on the conformist instincts of the Catholics and Southerners within its tent, but also as a safety valve in the political life of the nation as a whole. The divergence between Jew and Negro may, however, be short-term if Negroes like Bayard Rustin are able to reassert their leadership in the black community.

Theodore Bikel, the folk singer and long-time civil rights advocate, made the best presentation of the Jewish liberal attitude toward the Negro in an open letter of resignation to SNCC, occasioned by SNCC's position on "Jewish oppressors," "Israeli imperialism" and "the illegal state of Israel."

"I am an American," Bikel wrote. "I am a Jew. I have a commitment doubly reinforced by historical and moral commitment. I am determined to make equality a reality in this country . . . I am equally determined to honor the bonds to my ethnic and religious background." In concluding he said, "Think of Mickey Schwerner and Andy Goodman. You have no right to spit on their tomb."

Circumstances and time are actively at work in dissolving the real causes of Negro-Jewish animosities. It is hoped that when they dissolve, the hatreds will go with them. However, it is doubtful if the black and white problem has such an easy road ahead.

EPILOGUE:

PICTURES

AT AN

EXHIBITION

In the middle of 1967, Thomas P. F. Hoving, who had been Commissioner of Parks in 1965–66, when New York was still "Fun City," gave the go-ahead for a show on Harlem at the Metropolitan Museum of Art of which he was the Director. Buoyantly, he stated that the exhibition, which was to bar both paintings and sculpture but was to include "a thirteen-room, multi-media environment of sight and sound, including photomurals, film projections, video-tapes of Harlem street sounds and the voices of Duke Ellington, Langston Hughes, Malcolm X, and the king of soul songs, James Brown, . . . had nothing to do with art in the narrow sense—but everything to do with this museum and its evolving role and purpose in what we hope is its emerging position as a positive force in modern society."

Even before the show was wired for sound, however, the protests began to be registered. The first complaints

came from the white-establishment museum patrons, who viewed the mammoth hall on Fifth Avenue as a showcase for "high art" only. Hilton Kramer, writing in the Sunday *New York Times,* summed up this school of criticism when he said that the display was "not so much an exhibition as an amateur exercise in social evangelism."

Drowning out these polite critics were the shriller voices of a group of Harlem community leaders who had been invited to work on the show but had ended up as window dressing, while outside "professionals" made the real decisions. These leaders were joined in their discontent by a clutch of frustrated Harlem artists and sculptors, who resented the fact that their work had not been considered for the show.

Topping off this annoyance was the choice of *Harlem On My Mind* as a name for the display. Considering the storm of Jewish protest that was to come, the selection of this title, taken from a song written in 1933 by a prominent Jewish songwriter, Irving Berlin, was particularly inappropriate. It was also viewed as typical of the condescending paternalism that marked the planning and design of the entire exhibit.

Jervis Anderson, commenting on this aspect of the show, wrote in the *Times,* "Harlem On My Mind . . . has exotic, sentimental music to it; reeks of 20's, the 30's and even the 40's when more whites used to go uptown, especially at night, and when many black singers, musicians and writers fled to Europe."

The lyrics of the old Ethel Waters number, Mr. Anderson recalled, go "I've a longing to be low down, and my parlez-vous will not ring true, with Harlem on my Mind." Returning to the handling of the exhibit, he pointed out the juxtaposition between the pictures, many of which revealed, in Langston Hughes's words, "the edge of hell," and the black-tie opening of the show with couples dancing to the piped-in music of James Brown in the Militancy and Identity section. Anderson quoted one mu-

seum staff member as saying, "We'll be awfully disappointed if people don't start to dance."

This statement brought to writer Anderson's mind a second Langston Hughes quote, which he felt summed up the effect on blacks of the kind of intellectual slumming represented by the exhibit:

> Because my mouth is wide with laughter
> you do not hear my inner cry?
> Because my feet are gay with dancing
> you do not know I die?

To re-enforce these criticisms a covey of picketers arrived on the sidewalk in front of the museum on opening day. Their signs read, "That's White of Hoving" and "Soul Has Been Sold Again."

The clamor from the black community reached its apex on January 23, five days after the show opened, to record crowds and record numbers of protestors. The newly formed Black Emergency Cultural Coalition, which consisted of seventy-five Negro and white artists, demanded the show be closed down because it was so full of "distortions and misrepresentations . . . it conveys the white man's distorted, irrelevant and insulting picture of Harlem."

The black rage at the pop exploitation of Harlem misery for the amusement of the jaded palates of the jet set, however, paled into insignificance in the wake of the rising tide of Jewish anger.

The exhibit, like most such efforts, had a catalog. Foreseeing the possibility of great public interest, if not controversy, over the exhibit, Random House undertook to publish the museum souvenir and to distribute it to bookstores throughout the country. As it turned out, the catalog was even more controversial than the exhibit. This time it was the Jews who were offended. They, too, dis-

patched picketers to march up and down the crowded pavements in front of the museum.

This new rash of protest signs simply read: "Fight Anti-Semitism." The reason for the slogan was to be found in the introduction to the 255-page volume written by Candace Van Ellison when she was a high school student in 1967. In it she said, "Behind every hurdle that the Afro-American has yet to jump, stands the Jew who has already cleared it. Jewish shopkeepers are the only remaining 'survivors' in the expanding black ghettos . . . the lack of competition in the area allows the already exploited blacks to be further exploited by Jews . . . Psychologically speaking, blacks may find that anti-Jewish sentiments place them, for once, within a majority . . . our contempt for the Jews makes us feel more completely American in sharing a national prejudice."

The charge of Jewish exploitation, and the intimation that anti-Semitism could be the Negroes' key to the great white world, hit a nerve already rubbed raw by the open conflict between Negroes and Jews in the city's school strike and the reading of an anti-Semitic poem on radio station WBAI-FM.

Dore Schary, the Hollywood and Broadway producer, speaking as national chairman of the B'nai B'rith's Anti-Defamation League, called the catalog anti-Semitic. His criticism was joined by that of former State Supreme Court Justice Bernard Botein, who had just finished chairing Mayor Lindsay's Committee on Racial and Religious Prejudice, which had been alarmed by its findings of racial and religious bigotry.

Mayor Lindsay responded to the pressure of the thoroughly aroused and frightened Jewish community by denouncing the catalog and requesting its withdrawal until those sections that he described as "racist—mainly anti-Semitic" were deleted.

Standing in front of a large audience at the Bayside Jewish Center, a yarmulka on his head, the mayor sol-

emnly pledged that he "would permit no official, high or petty, to engage in racial or religious slurs—white or black, Jewish or Gentile."

His critics remained unappeased, convinced that the mayor's desire for the new and the swinging, his concern with appearance rather than reality, had, by abdicating responsibility to the Ford Foundation and then to the Demonstration school districts, created the circumstances leading to the New York teachers' strike and the subsequent human relations debacle. Mrs. Elinor Guggenheim, a member of the city's aristocracy, who also happens to be Jewish, characterized Lindsay's actions and words as "inept." Criticizing his attack on the museum, she said it was "ill conceived and not designed to bring peace . . . intemperate, it once more put the fat in the fire."

Mrs. Guggenheim, who has long been at odds with the mayor and quit the City Planning Commission after the mayor announced that he would not reappoint her when her term ended, admonished the city's chief executive "to forget political images, street peregrinations and TV postures, and to give the time thus saved to the thoughtful and wise guidance that is needed."

Museum Director Hoving, stung by the criticism and by the desertion of his good friend the mayor, at first refused to retreat. Ignoring the high art critics and the black carping, he petulantly answered the Jews. "If the truth hurts, then so be it." Finally, unable to withstand what he termed "unbelievable" pressure, "so great I don't think one person could stand it," he offered an apology and stuck a disclaimer in the catalog from Miss Van Ellison, who at this point had matured into an eighteen-year-old sophomore at the University of Bridgeport. Wrote Miss Van Ellison: "In regard to the controversy concerning the section in my introduction dealing with inter-group relations, I would like to state that the facts were organized according to the socioeconomic realities in Harlem at that

time and that any racist overtones which were inferred from the passages quoted out of context, are regrettable."

Miss Van Ellison's reasoned explanation at another time and in another place might well have been accepted at face value. In fact, under other circumstances, such a disclaimer might not even have been required. But in New York City, in January 1969, the apologia didn't even serve as a mollifying factor. If anything, it served only to escalate Jewish rage.

Representative James Scheuer of the Bronx, an agile Democratic politician who was eying the mayor's seat, saw in the contretemps an opportunity to make political hay. He termed the catalog "crude and obvious, virulent, anti-Semitic and anti-ethnic."

Not to be outdone was the new president of the City Council, Francis X. Smith. He called for "a summit conference of civic leaders to deal with racial tensions." A resolution signed by thirteen councilmen was introduced into the city's legislative body proposing an end to the $3,000,000 yearly municipal subsidy to the museum. There were rumors of a similar move in Albany to cut off the state's $100,000 annual allowance.

Hoving got the point despite the fact that the catalogs were selling like hot cakes—16,000 out of 40,000 in the first twelve days. He withdrew them from circulation and attempted an apology. "The *Harlem On My Mind* catalog," he said, with refined understatement, "has been the object of severe criticism since the exhibition opened. The continuing controversy over its distribution is aggravating an already tense situation in New York. In addition, it is distracting the public from judging the exhibition on its merits. The museum has no desire to offend any persons or groups and no desire to engage in contention. We sincerely hope that the controversy that has involved the exhibition will now come to a close. We have important tasks ahead, and we are anxious to proceed with them and with our responsibility to the public."

With the catalog's withdrawal, criticism focused on its publisher, Random House. Robert L. Bernstein, president and chief executive officer of the firm, admitted that it had been "an error in judgment" to publish the book in "its present form." Stating that the soft-cover catalogs, which sold for $1.90, would be withdrawn from the market, he went on to say that "we felt that for us now to recall the bookstore edition (4,600 hardback copies, priced at $12.95 each, which had been distributed across the country) would serve no useful purpose and might set a dangerous precedent with respect to freedom of the press. However," he added, "all future copies would contain an explanatory statement and booksellers can if they wish, return their copies."

The bizarre uproar captured in microcosm all the fears of the Jewish community, the centuries-long frustrations of the Negroes and the basic lack of empathy with these fears and frustrations of the nation's ruling WASPs.

Negroes, angered by what they considered the museum's intellectual slumming, never gave a second thought to the derogatory comments in the catalog about the Jews. With the exception of such headliners as Whitney Young, Roy Wilkins and Bayard Rustin, who not only believe that integration is a realizable goal, but whose organizations are heavily dependent upon white liberal, and in particular Jewish liberal, donors, few spoke out quickly or clearly against the catalog or the blatant and seemingly widespread use of anti-Semitism in the cause of black reaffirmation. Later, when the Jews had validated their opposition, many Negro leaders were to claim that they had spoken out in defense of the Jews but the news media was not interested in their statements.

This obvious reluctance on the part of middle-class Negroes to take on the militants stems in large part from fear of the hooligan tactics that many of these self-appointed leaders use to gain acquiescence. To be labeled an Uncle Tom is a physical threat as well as an epithet. With good

reason Negroes believe they cannot rely on the police to protect them from this type of attack, so they defend themselves with silence.

The silence, however, struck Jews oddly and unfavorably. Negro leaders, however, absorbed by their own concerns, tended to give little thought to Jewish reaction. They did not at first realize that the Jews were mortally offended by this verbiage.

Rabbi Jay Kaufman of Washington, D.C., a leader in the half-million-member B'nai B'rith, explained why they were. "The anti-Jewish character of a good deal of Negro extremism," he said, "is a device by black leaders to subvert the Negro community and serve their own power needs and ambitions. It is a brand of anti-Semitism rare to the American continent, though classical in Europe. It does not spring from religious roots but is carefully cultivated and artfully created by demagogue leaders unable to offer any constructive programs to mitigate the suffering of deprived Negroes in the ghetto, so they offer them jobs Jews have attained through training, labor, proficiency and seniority. It is a cheap and larcenous scheme."

What Rabbi Kaufman hinted at, and others have been too polite to mention, is that because of their long history of deprivation, Negroes find themselves unable to compete equally with whites now that opportunities are open to them. The onus of this failure is a heavy burden, especially on the aggressive and undereducated men who realize that they will never be able to bridge the chasm between the ghetto and the white world. In bitterness they call upon all Negroes to reject the opportunities of which they cannot avail themselves. Anti-Semitism fits easily into this unhappy void.

In a sense this variety of Negro anti-Semitism has its genesis in the same bitter soil that brought forth the joke about the Jewish stutterer who blamed his rejection as a radio announcer on anti-Semitism.

Robert Klein, the tall Jewish manager of Philadelphia's Negro-oriented radio station WDAS, who is deeply involved both professionally and emotionally with that city's black community, commented, "Blacks use this anti-Semitic thing but they don't really think much about it. It's like 'running the dozens' with them [a game of verbal insult particularly popular with teen-age boys]. They feel that the Jews somehow are in the family and they can get away with it."

In fact, the anger and fear excited by this abuse probably act as a goad to many militants. For example, it would be hard to find any other rationale for the wild statements made by Tyrone Wood, a purported NYU student, on the controversial Julius Lester show just three weeks after the infamous Campbell "poetry reading." He said, "As far as I am concerned, more power to Hitler. He didn't make enough lampshades out of them." Predictably, picket lines appeared in front of the station, newspapers were flooded with protesting letters to the editor, and there was a renewed public uproar.

Negroes, who have so long substituted the word for the deed, found nourishment in hyperbole, and have made style into substance because a cruel environment made anything more than rhetoric impossible, find it electrifying to have whites take their words seriously.

Certainly the Jewish reaction to the black words is far different from that of other whites. In Philadelphia, for example, in the fall of 1968, there was an ugly confrontation between black students of South Philadelphia's Bok Vocational School and the surrounding residents, almost all of whom were Italian.

The black kids, frightened by the neighborhood, used to go to and from school in large groups. The neighbors saw the groups as gangs and were equally afraid of the kids. The boys, sensing the fear, grew bolder and would rambunctiously break off antennas from parked automobiles and write obscenities on the walls and sidewalks.

The neighbors began to buy large dogs, mainly German shepherds. The sight of the animals escalated the boys' misbehavior. They took to running down the streets chanting, "Kill the cops! Kill the Wops!"

The neighbors, in conjunction with the local Wallace campaign headquarters, staged a street demonstration outside of the school. They demanded that the school be integrated and that at least half of its students be white.

The demand was granted. The Negroes talked about white racism, but not once did the whites complain about the anti-Italian attitude of the students. It was the presence, not the vocabulary, of the blacks that disturbed them.

Said one member of the crowd, "Who gives a shit what those niggers say."

Obviously, no jollies were to be gotten by verbally baiting the likes of these South Phillyites.

"The problem," radio station manager Klein said, "is that Jews are beginning to react very much like the Italians and that they do not, despite Negro expectations, view themselves as part of the Negro family."

Backing up Klein's statement, JDL counsel Bert Zweiborn said, "We are going to change the over-riding attitude on the part of government and a wide variety of people that in the age of confrontation politics the Jew is the least likely to fight back and to be a problem. Jews are tired of running from their enemies or appeasing them. They are ready to fight back."

Jews are not only outraged by the defamation, they are also terrified by it. In their experience, the word has been followed by the deed, the insult by the pogrom.

In the wake of the school strike, the Lester radio programs and the Metropolitan exhibit came a spate of ads, conferences and declarations on the causes and cures of the tensions between Negroes and Jews. The whole subject became so fashionable that *Time* magazine ran a cover story on it. In their epicurean regurgitation of a moun-

tainous pile of facts on the subject, the editors of the widely read weekly found in Old-World ghetto optimism a moral for modern-day Americans. Comfortingly, they confided in their best American-century voice that Negro anti-Semitism had at least the positive virtue of reminding assimilating Jews of their identity. As if, even in America, Jews could ever really be allowed to forget.

Re-enforced by the newsworthiness of the subject, the Board of Education announced it was setting up two telephone numbers specifically to deal with complaints about racial or religious bigotry. Cleveland Robinson, the president of the Negro American Labor Council and one of the city's Human Rights Commissioners, demanded his agency hold a special meeting on racial tensions.

The *Amsterdam News,* the nation's largest Negro weekly, appealed in glaring headlines for "a playing down by the media of outcries about how much hate there is between whites and blacks in the city"; while in Harlem, a group of fifty rabbis and Negro clergymen got together to discuss their common misunderstandings. The meeting, the culmination of a series of smaller unpublicized confabs, was chaired by the Reverend H. Carl McCall, a former Deputy Administrator of New York's Human Resources Administration. The participants sought to see "the tensions in a broader perspective of competing groups in a city where there are not enough resources to go around." McCall, however, picked up the *Amsterdam News* theme and expressed grave concern over what he termed the prominence given to what he claimed were the statements of "isolated bigots."

Backing McCall, Reverend Wyatt Tee Walker, a former aide to Martin Luther King, complained, "What does it matter what the black community says. I've severely criticized Rap Brown and Stokely Carmichael and said that violence won't work. The press wasn't interested in that. We have decried anti-Semitism and racism in our community. If the opposite were true, conditions would be

a thousand times worse." Then he stated that "it is a mistake to isolate Jews and see them in a special confrontation situation with blacks. When one considers the Black-Jew relationship, one cannot consider it outside the color relationship."

As Samuel Bullock, Philadelphia's outstanding black psychiatrist, said, "Jews have always been wonderfully empathetic to Negroes. They have been our allies in all our legal fights and politically, too. But no matter how empathetic they are, they are always going to be stopped by the color barrier. They are white. They can't make themselves black if they wanted to, and why should they want to?"

Albert Vorspan of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations picked up the colloquy on the Jewish side. He not only deplored the acrimony between the groups but he asserted, "There's an identity which continues between us despite the shouting and all of the anger. At the same time," he pointed out, "the anger of the Jewish community has a basis in reality." Vorspan then referred to the thousands of years of anti-Semitism culminating in the German extermination of six million Jews.

The theme of the six million, unfortunately, does not evoke in Negroes the same response that it does in Jews. Blacks tend to turn off this much-repeated refrain. They view the Nazi era as ancient history because it ended more than a quarter of a century ago. To Negroes, the repetition of this doleful record seems a totally irrelevant answer to charges made by them of exploitation by Jewish merchants and landlords. It does not alter the fact in black minds that Jewish teachers have failed despite great efforts to educate black slum children or that Jewish social workers in the hated welfare system contribute to the destruction of the already shaky family structure.

But Vorspan's litany of Hebraic sorrows was not to be interrupted by these insights. Jews, he went on, continue to be at the receiving end of "bitter Arab hostility. I see

anxiety [among Jews] which borders on hysteria . . . a profound visceral reaction . . . a kind of trauma . . . [but] Jews come by their paranoia honestly." Then he got to the real point of the Jewish fear, which wasn't black anti-Semitism at all but "the failure of white Christian leadership to speak up against anti-Semitism."

"It is," said Rabbi Robert Lehman of the Hebrew Tabernacle Congregation at 605 W. 161st Street, summing things up, "very difficult to be a liberal Jew today."

The American Jewish Congress in a full-page ad in the *New York Times* put the Jewish case in its proper historic frame of reference. "The enemy," it said, "is silence. It is important that every American understands the anger and dismay that swept the Jewish community when the Metropolitan Museum of Art published the racist catalog for its exhibit, *Harlem On My Mind.*

"We have had a long experience with the big lie—in this case, that the Negro plight is the result of some kind of conspiracy by the Jews.

"What disturbed us deeply was the blindness of those like Mr. Hoving who failed to recognize the slander and argued it was not there because they did not see it.

"What troubled us profoundly was the silence of those (black and white) who by failing to speak out, gave their consent to a group libel . . .

"The prevalance of this national disgrace—and the indifference to it of men of prominence who should, quite simply, know better—has been manifested in many ways during recent months. It was demonstrated by James Hester, the president of New York University, who after learning the racist views of John F. Hatchett, nevertheless insisted on retaining him in his post until Mr. Hatchett's public behavior so embarrassed the university that even President Hester could no longer abide it.

"It was demonstrated by the Manager of WBAI-FM, Frank Millspaugh, who defended the reading of an obscene, anti-Semitic poem . . .

"Let us put it bluntly, those who allow the actions of bigots are equally guilty of bigotry."

As Robert Klein said in a conversation with Sam Bullock, "The real Jewish nightmare is that the white Christian elite will set the Negroes and Jews upon each other and then sit back and enjoy the fireworks. In this way relieving themselves of the problem of serious criticism of the institutions of the society which they have created and by which they benefit. Up to now, when Negroes attacked Jews it has been because Jews were white and the Jews, although frightened by the black onslaught, always felt that they could rely on the rest of the white society to back them up. Now, they are not so sure. Suppose this country takes a decided turn to the right and white support is withdrawn from the Jews. Jews will then be classed along with Negroes as outsiders. The logical conclusion of such withdrawal would be that the larger society would view with indifference the fate of the Jews in the ghetto and they might well encourage Negroes to concentrate their attacks on Jews as a kind of safety valve. Such a strategy," he concluded glumly, "has been used before."

The Jewish nightmare that Klein was attempting to define actually unfolded in Europe in the last four hundred years. What panics Jews is that it can happen here. By substituting the black underclass for the Eastern European peasantry and the WASP establishment for the aristocracy and haute bourgeoisie, the stage is set for such a re-enactment.

The black underclass, humiliated and oppressed, is taught to view the Jews as exploiters and capitalists. Gradually, all their pent-up hatred is focused on the available Jew and allowed to explode.

The WASPs, from their perches in the upper limbs of the tree, watch the bloodbath with detachment. The sight of Negroes clubbing to death their erstwhile allies in progress, the Jews, seems to them in some ways fitting.

After all, so the nightmare runs, it serves the Jews right for going on so about Negro rights and for teaching the blacks to agitate. From this vantage point, Jews are seen not as capitalists and exploiters, but as anarchists, *agents provocateurs* and radicals—even communists. But before the nightmare could become a reality, the Jewish uproar achieved its immediate goals.

The mayor and school board officials began to work actively for the expulsion of the two black teachers who had publicly expressed anti-Semitic sentiments. William Booth, the Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights, who had been caught in the switches by prematurely praising the Metropolitan's hot show and had in a long series of incidents proved insensitive to the sensibilities of the Jewish citizenry, was rather ceremoniously kicked upstairs. He was made a judge. The black militants tried, but failed, to make a case of "political lynching" in this time-honored political ploy.

Community control, at least as practiced in Ocean Hill–Brownsville, East Harlem and the Two Bridges District, was in for a drastic overhaul. The poverty program, which —under the umbrella of the Human Resources Administration—had financed the likes of Jesse Gray, seemed likely to drown itself in a sea of financial troubles. Reports indicated that as much as $2.7 million had been stolen by various paladins of the poor.

Even Charles Kenyatta, the leader of Harlem's Mau Mau militants, began to understand the significance of the building force of anti-anti-Semitism and the depressing effect it was likely to have on the prestige of the militants in the white community and their ability to collect money and support from governmental agencies and from the large foundations. In grave jeopardy as well was the militant's credibility. The anti-anti-Semitic backlash had brought their Negro critics into the spotlight.

In a press conference at his West 125th Street headquarters, Kenyatta said, "The response of Jewish leaders to

black anti-Semitism was blown out of all proportion and was really indicative of their anti-Negro feelings." Coincidentally, six ministers labeling themselves "Black Concerned Clergy" held another news conference at the headquarters of the United Federation of Teachers at 260 Park Avenue South. Their spokesman, the Reverend Henry Dudley, charged Albert Shanker, president of the UFT, of singling out individual incidents of Negro anti-Semitism to blame the entire black community unjustly.

As with all things Jewish, there was no single, simple, direct response to the events in New York. No sooner had the results of their original outburst become obvious than a counter-reaction set in. Wary of success, Jews began to fear that in the long run their anxiety might, by calling attention to their vulnerability, create that which they feared most—an anti, anti-anti-Semitic backlash. In particular, they were alarmed by the possibility that black power extremists might find unwitting allies not only among the lunatic anti-Semitic white right but among politicians eager to maintain racial peace in the cities at the expense of Jewish interests.

Earl Raab, a California sociologist, expounded this thesis in an article in *Commentary* in which he took issue with the thought that has comforted so many Jews for so long—that Negro anti-Semitism is really only an expression of hostility toward the white man, or a rhetorical weapon.

"That," said Raab, "is an exact and accurate description of political anti-Semitism. The enemy becomes the Jew, 'the man' becomes the Jew. The villain is not so much the actual Jewish merchant on the corner, as the corporate Jew who stands symbolically for generic evil. 'Don't be disturbed,' the Jews are told, 'this is just poetic excess.' But the ideology of political anti-Semitism has precisely always been poetic excess, which has not prevented it from becoming murderous . . .

"There is the possibility," Mr. Raab continued, "of a

classic marriage, a manipulative symbiosis, between the privileged class and the disadvantaged mass—in this case, a WASP class and a black man . . . [It is] the kind of symbiosis which existed in the 1920's between respectable Republican leaders and the Ku Klux Klan, and which permitted a temper of repression and bigotry to flourish.

"The anti-Semitic ideology developing in the black movement would be eminently suited to such purposes. Some have suggested that the edges of this possibility are actually peeking out in New York City."

Echoing Raab in the same issue of *Commentary* was Maurice Goldbloom in an article entitled "The New York School Crisis." "There is a widespread movement now afoot," Goldbloom stated, "to ally the bottom and top layers of American society against those in the middle, and especially against the organized workers. This strategy has implicit assumptions; it stems from the belief on one side that the first enemy of the man at the bottom is the man one step up and on the other, that the discontents of the most wretched can effectively be appeased without any expense of those at the top."

Commenting on this thesis, Rabbi Richard Rubenstein, Chaplain of the University of Pittsburgh and veteran of the 1965 Freedom March to Montgomery, Alabama, said, "This inevitable process has been aided by the decision of the Ford Foundation to lend its prestige and financial aid to the movement for neighborhood control of schools. Jews are the easiest and most convenient group to sacrifice before the pressure of black power take-over. The non-Jewish white community has more to gain by satisfying Negro, rather than Jewish interests, when they conflict."

Leading Jewish liberals like Arthur Goldberg, late of the U.S. Supreme Court and the UN and as this is written the Democratic candidate for Governor of New York, however, saw the damage that Jews could inflict on themselves by encouraging the growth of anti-Negro feelings in

their own community and warned against exaggerating the fears of anti-Semitism and allowing these fears to disrupt the traditional Jewish support of Negro rights.

Others, such as Murray Gordon of the American Jewish Congress, added, "What troubles me deeply is that denunciation and over-reaction will keep us from dealing with the real causes of racial hatred."

These statements were backed up by a plea from the thousand-member Central Conference of American Rabbis, representing America's Reformed Jews. "We should understand the over-riding need of a powerless people, sick with self-hatred to gain dignity and pride along with a fair share of economic and political power . . . We must not allow ourselves to be divided, Jew against Negro."

Despite the good intentions of the liberal Jewish leadership, it is difficult to imagine that Jews will easily forget or forgive the ugly words spoken by the militants. The example given by the Israelis of aggressive action taken against a sea of troubles is one that is increasingly being adopted by younger middle-class Jews. They view their leaders' pleas for tolerance as a repetition of the unsuccessful European pattern of trying to buy off their enemies. This new generation would prefer to frighten their foes away. It is this militant spirit that has given rise to the Jewish Defense League. The League's philosophy, as stated by Philadelphia JDL leader Rabbi Harold Novoseller, is "to do away with Jew haters and those who view Jews as easy pickings for violence. Anyone that hits Jews we are going to hit back harder."

Unquestionably, too, the national attention given to the militants' new anti-Semitic credo will have its effect throughout the nation's black ghettos. Where New York leads, others are sure to follow.

The fate of the Negro-Jewish relationship, however, lies beyond the power of either, or even both, parties to

determine. It lies in white America's response to the black challenge. The resolution of these hatreds, or their magnification, lies in a choice between making what Gunnar Myrdal called "the American Creed" of equality, a reality, or junking it. Upon this decision rests the fate not only of the Negro's quest for dignity and justice, and the Jew's search for security, but also the fate and the future of the United States of America as both a great power and a democracy.

About the Author

LENORA E. BERSON went to school in Philadelphia, where she was born, and later attended the University of Chicago and the University of Pennsylvania, from which she graduated. She has been an editorial researcher for *Time* magazine and is at present teaching a course in sociology at Drexel University. *The Negroes and the Jews* grew out of *Case Study of a Riot,* which the author wrote for the Institute of Human Relations Press. She is also the author of *The Dispossessed,* written for the Philadelphia Housing Association.

Mrs. Berson lives in the center city of Philadelphia with her two children and husband, Norman S. Berson, who is a member of the State Legislature of Pennsylvania and also a leader of the reform movement in Philadelphia.

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 9999 00710 614 7

NO LONGER THE PROPERTY
OF BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

7-71

DUDLEY [redacted]
BRANCH LIBRARY

E185.61
.B47
1971
DU

The [illegible] the pocket indicates the date on or before which this book should be returned to the Library.

Please do not remove cards from this pocket.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

LENORA E. BERSON was born and educated in Philadelphia. She received a Bachelor of Philosophy degree from the University of Chicago and her Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees from the University of Pennsylvania. She has worked as an editorial researcher for *Time* Magazine and is currently teaching a course in sociology at Drexel University. *The Negroes and the Jews* grew out of the highly regarded *Case Study of a Riot,* which the author wrote for the Institute of Human Relations Press. She is also the author of *The Dispossessed,* written for the Philadelphia Housing Association.

Mrs. Berson lives in the center city of Philadelphia with her two children and husband, Norman S. Berson, who is a member of the State Legislature of Pennsylvania and a leader of the reform movement in Philadelphia.

Jacket design by Wendell Minor

Random House, Inc., New York, N.Y. 10022
Publishers of THE RANDOM HOUSE DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE: the Unabridged and College Editions, The Modern Library and Vintage Books. Printed in U.S.A.

COMMENTS ON

The Negroes AND The Jews

"Lenora Berson's *The Negroes and the Jews* is exciting journalist history, and uncovers depths I had not known existed ...Some of the images from Mrs. Berson's book refuse to leave my mind... A troubling book, made out of interviews and reportage and historical studies, illuminating the present by the still more terrifying past."

Michael Novak
author of *Experience of Nothingness* and
Theology of Radical Politics

"I read it with great fascination and admiration. She presents precisely and logically a vast amount of background information that has perhaps been known and observed but never made sufficiently relevant nor lined up to show some of the causes behind the tragic movement toward alienation between Jewish Americans and Black Americans.

"Personally, this book is an immeasurable help in certain aspects of my own work and I am extremely grateful to Mrs. Berson for writing it. I hope it will be widely read and studied."

John Howard Griffin
author of *Black Like Me*